Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan 2025-2040

Preliminary Screening Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment
December 2025

Contents

INTRODUCTION **1**

SEA SCREENING **3**

Scope of the Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan 3

BASELINE INFORMATION **4**

Context 4
Biodiversity, Flora, and fauna 5
National and Local Designations 9
Population 10
Human Health 11
Soil 11
Water 12
Air and Climatic Factors 15
Material Assets 15
Cultural Heritage 17
Landscape 19

SEA SCREENING **22**

SEA SCREENING CONCLUSION **33**

HRA SCREENING ASSESSMENT **34**

HRA SCREENING CONCLUSION **50**

Appendix A- Conservation Objectives of the European Sites 51
Broadland SAC, SPA, Ramsar 51
Breydon Water SAC, SPA, Ramsar 53
Greater Wash SAC, SPA 54
Great Yarmouth North Denes SAC, SPA 57
Norfolk Valley Fens SAC 58
The Broads SAC 60
River Wensum SAC 62
Paston Great Barn SAC 64
Winteron-Horsey Dunes SAC 65

Figure 1: Designated Neighbourhood Area 2
Figure 2- Wildlife Designations 6
Figure 3- Wildlife Designations within 20km distance of Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan Area 9
Figure 4-County Wildlife Sites and Priority Habitats (Source Norfolk County Council, 2025) 10
Figure 5-Hoveton population age profile vs Norfolk - Census 2021 11
Figure 6- Hoveton population age profile 2011 vs 2021 (Census data) 11
Figure 7-Agricultural Land Classification (Source: Natural England, 2025) 12

Figure 8-Flood risk from rivers and sea in Hoveton (Source: DEFRA, 2025) 13
Figure 9- Surface Water Flood Risk (Source: DEFRA, 2025) 13
Figure 10-Surface Water Flood Risk within the built-up area of Hoveton (Source: DEFRA, 2025) 14
Figure 11-Public Rights of Way within Hoveton (Source: Norfolk County Council, 2025) 16
Figure 12- Heritage Assets within and around Hoveton (Source: Historic England 2025) 18
Figure 13-Hoveton location within the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment Map (Source: North Norfolk District Council, Landscape Character Assessment SPD 2021) 19
Figure 14-Schedule 1 Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects 23
Figure 15-Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes 24
Figure 16-Application of SEA Directive to HNP 27
Figure 17-Likely Significant Effects 32
Figure 18- Table of the International Designated Wildlife Sites within 20km radius of HNP 37
Figure 19- Map of the International Designated Wildlife Sites within 20km radius of HNP 38
Figure 20-Summary of Impact Pathways 42
Figure 21- HRA Screening Assessment 50

Introduction

1. Hoveton Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for its area known as HNP throughout this document. The planning period will be 2025-2040 and the designated area (**See Figure 1**) is located within North Norfolk District Council and the Broads Authority Executive Area. Collective Community Planning has been appointed by the parish councils to consider whether there is a need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken on HNP. This is required under European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive), transposed into UK law through the SEA Regulations[1].

2. SEA may be required for a Neighbourhood Plan if it is likely to have significant environmental effects. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is like an SEA but includes assessment of the likely significant effects of a plan or programme on economic and social factors, as well as environmental factors. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) clarifies that there is no legal requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan to be subject to a SA, but that SA can be used to demonstrate how the plan will contribute to sustainable development.

[1] The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633), as amended by the Environmental Assessment and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). It should be noted that the purpose of the amendments to the SEA Regulations is to ensure that the law functions correctly after the UK has left the European Union. No substantive changes are made to the way the SEA regime operates.

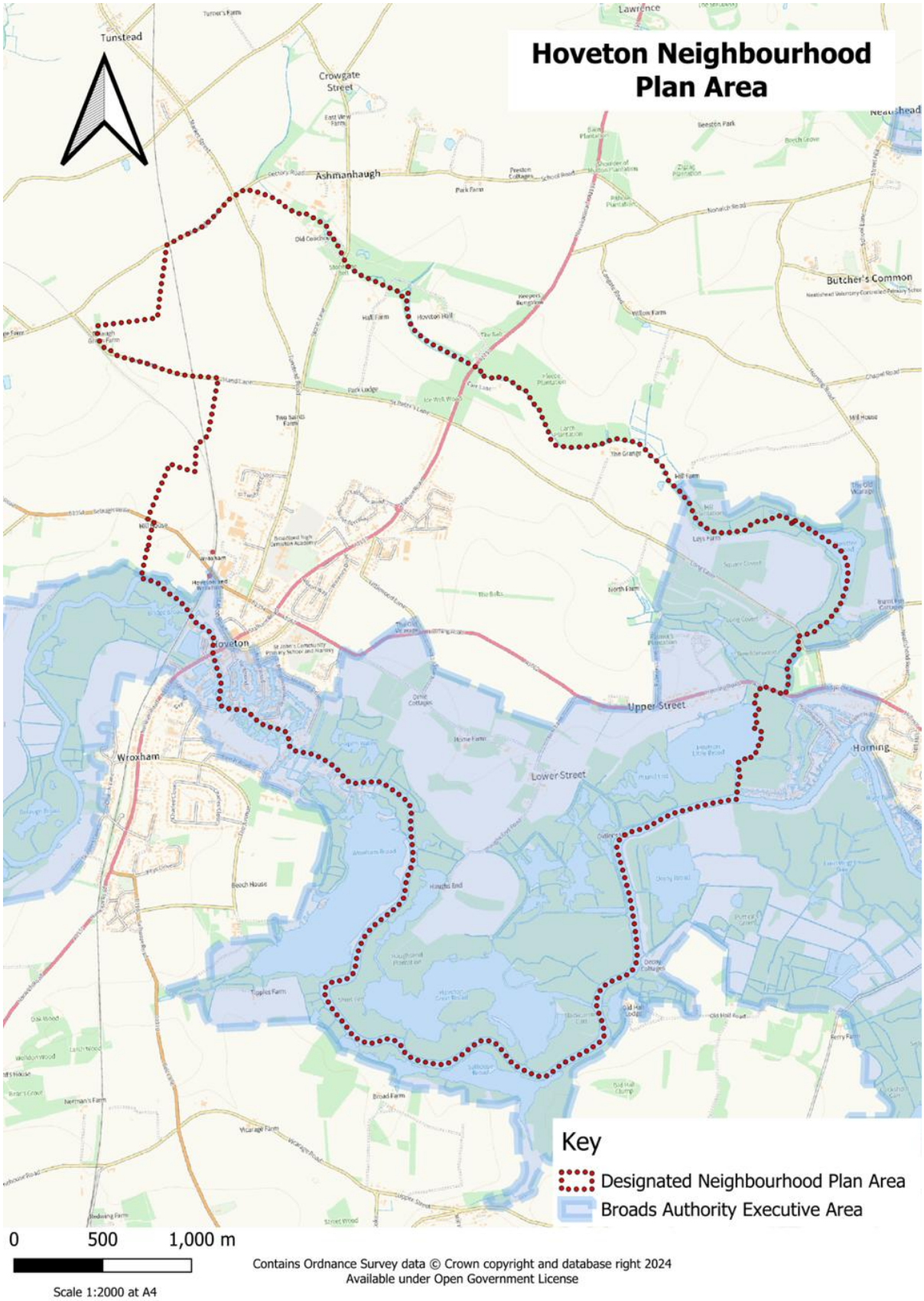


Figure 1: Designated Neighbourhood Area

Scope of the Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan

3. A draft (Regulation 14) version of HNP is currently being prepared. It is intended that this is subject to public consultation in early 2026. HNP includes a vision for the long-term future of Hoveton, along with aims to support delivery of this vision. The current draft vision is:

Vision for Hoveton in 2040

By 2040, Hoveton will be a thriving, welcoming village at the heart of the Broads. It will be recognised for its distinct identity, its riverside setting, and its strong community spirit.

Growth will meet local housing needs, with well-designed homes that respect the village's character, landscape and heritage. The natural environment, including the riverside, green spaces and ecological corridors, will be protected and enhanced.

Residents and visitors will have access to a high-quality, flexible community centre that supports social, cultural and sporting activities for all ages. Improved recreation spaces and better facilities for children, young people and older residents will help maintain a balanced and inclusive community. Safer walking and cycling routes, better connectivity and sustainable transport options will make it easier and more enjoyable to move around the village.

Local businesses, tourism and visitor attractions will continue to flourish, providing jobs and services while supporting a year-round economy. Development will be supported by resilient infrastructure, sustainable water management and measures that address the challenges of climate change.

Above all, Hoveton will remain a place where people feel connected—to each other, to the landscape, and to the unique character of the Broads.

4. The draft plan currently includes nine objectives to deliver this vision:

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

A. Deliver high-quality housing that meets local needs, prioritising smaller and more affordable homes, and ensure new development reflects Hoveton's village character.

B. Promote sensitive redevelopment of brownfield land and underused spaces, especially within the village centre and along the riverside, to enhance vitality and visual appeal.

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives
C. Enhance community facilities so that they meet the needs of all generations, supporting a balanced and inclusive community, and enabling flexible, accessible spaces that can adapt to future needs. D. Provide resilient infrastructure, including transport, drainage, sewage infrastructure, utilities and digital connectivity, to support new development and safeguard quality of life. E. Protect and enhance the natural environment, delivering biodiversity net gain, improving air and water quality, and strengthening ecological networks. F. Enable active travel by creating safe and attractive walking and cycling connections within the village and to the countryside. G. Protect and enhance Hoveton's heritage, conserving both designated and non-designated assets and ensuring new development responds positively to their character and setting. H. Support a thriving local economy that provides opportunities for businesses of all sizes and a sustainable visitor economy that reflects, and takes pride in, Hoveton's riverside identity. I. Strengthen climate resilience by ensuring new development adapts to challenges such as flooding, energy efficiency, and sustainable water management.

5. **The plan does not allocate land for development.**

Baseline Information

6. This section summarises baseline information for the HNP area, drawing on the Evidence Base which will accompany the Neighbourhood Plan.

Context

7. Hoveton had a population of 2,100 and is located approximately eight miles north-east of Norwich, just east of its neighbour Wroxham. Hoveton and Wroxham straddle the River Bure and together form the main gateway to the Norfolk Broads National Park. Hoveton is a large village in North Norfolk District. North Norfolk District Council describe how Hoveton's size and services, particularly when taken with Wroxham (which sits in Broadland District), means that it acts as a local retail and service centre for the surrounding villages[2]. Parts of Hoveton's centre span Local Authority boundaries and fall under the Broads Authority Administrative

[2] North Norfolk local plan 2016-36 proposed submission - accessed 01/08/2024

Area.

8. There is evidence of human activity in Hoveton dating back to Neolithic times and the parish shows a rich history from medieval times onwards. It has evolved over time from a small agricultural community to a thriving centre of Broads tourism. The village features a mix historic buildings and more modern developments, reflecting its growth and development over the centuries. The local economy is heavily influenced by tourism, with many seasonal visitors coming to explore the Broads and enjoy outdoor activities. The village offers essential amenities, including public transport, shops, pubs and restaurants which cater both to visitors and residents. Hoveton is accessible by road, rail, bus and boat and has a train station providing connections to Norwich and beyond. Hoveton is around 10 miles away from Norwich International Airport.

9. The Norfolk Heritage Explorer describes Hoveton's long history, being well established by the time of the Norman Conquest[3]. Its population, land ownership and resources are detailed in the Domesday Book of 1086. The parish has several important heritage assets which are detailed later in this document.

Biodiversity, Flora, and fauna

10. There are International and National statutory designated sites in the neighbourhood area to the south of the boundary as shown in **Figure 2**:

- **The Broads** Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- **Broadland** Ramsar and Special Protection Area (SPA)
- **Bure Broads and Marshes** Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI)

[3] Norfolk Heritage Explorer - Hoveton Parish Summary - accessed 01/08/2024

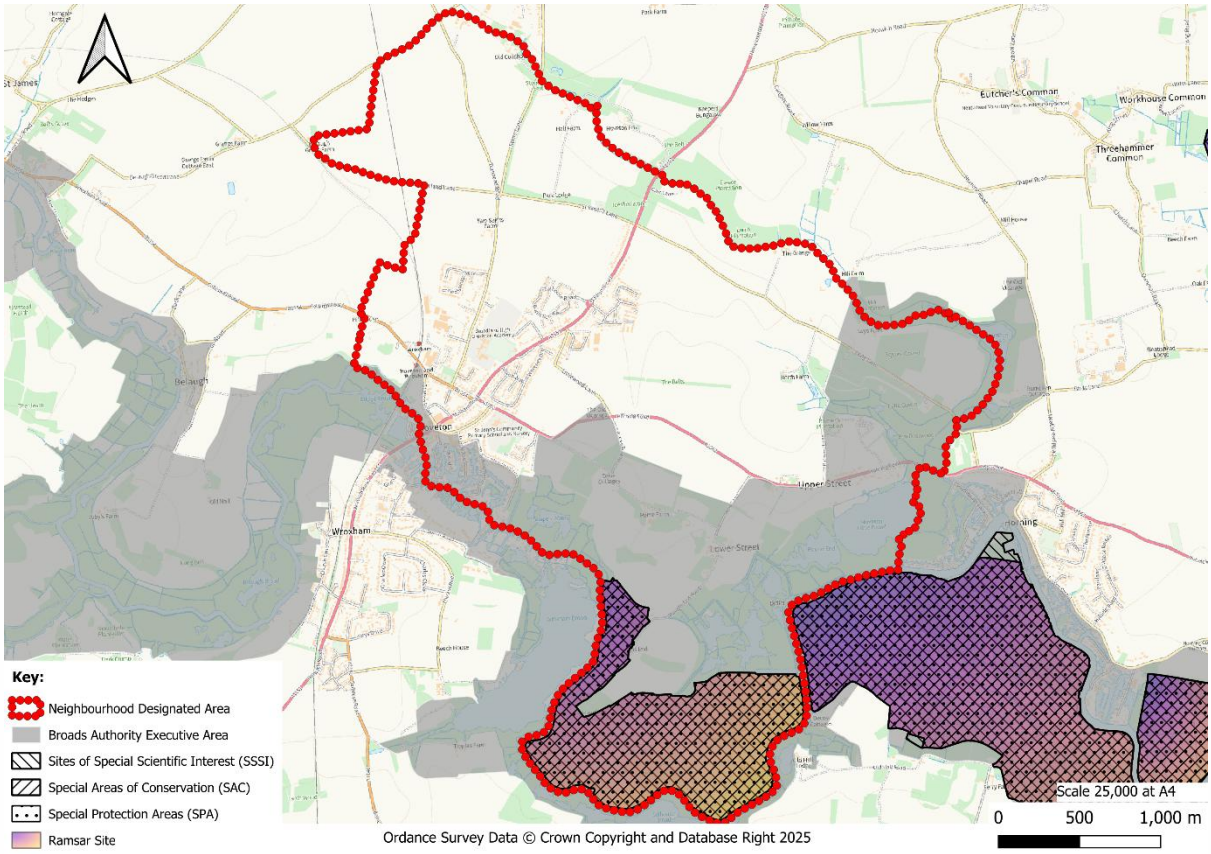


Figure 2- Wildlife Designations

11. **The Broads (SAC)** are a series of flooded medieval peat cuttings. They lie within the floodplains of five principal river systems, known as Broadland. The Broads sits outside of the designated area to the northeast and south. The area includes the river valley systems of the Bure, Yare and Waveney and their major tributaries. The distinctive open landscape comprises a complex and interlinked mosaic of wetland habitats including open water, reedbeds, carr woodland, grazing marsh, tall herb fen, transition mire and fen meadow, forming one of the finest marshland complexes in the UK4. The differing types of management of the vegetation for reed, sedge, and marsh hay, coupled with variations in hydrology and substrate, support an extremely diverse range of plant communities. The area is of international importance for a variety of wintering and breeding raptors and waterbirds associated with extensive lowland marshes.

12. **The Broads** contain several examples of naturally nutrient-rich lakes. Although artificial, having been created by peat digging in medieval times, these lakes and the ditches in areas of fen and drained marshlands support relict vegetation of the original Fenland flora, and collectively this site contains one of the richest assemblages of rare and local aquatic species in the UK[5].

13. **Broadland** (**SPA/Ramsar/SSSI/NNR)** is a designated site which is within 2km of the designated area to the north-east. It is a low-lying wetland complex straddling

[4] JNCC.2008. Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands mentioned Broadland and The Broads. Source: untitled (jncc.gov.uk)
[5] Natural England. 2014. EC Directive 92/43 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Source the-broads-sac-documents.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

the boundaries between east Norfolk and northern Suffolk in eastern England. As stated in the Ramsar overview, it is an area of "*low-lying wetland complex composed of the Bure, Yare, Thurne, and Waveney river systems of the Norfolk Broads. The mosaic of wetland habitats includes open water, reedbeds, carr woodland, grazing marsh, and fen meadow, with an extensive complex of flooded medieval peat diggings. Outstanding assemblages of rare plants and invertebrates occur at the site -- amongst a rich insect fauna are nationally rare dragonflies, spiders, moths, and butterflies, and the area is a stronghold for the butterfly Papilio machaon brittanica as well as a number of nationally rare breeding birds, including Botaurus stellaris and Circus aeruginosus. Several species of waterbirds winter there and include internationally important numbers of Bewick's swan, Cygnus columbianus bewickii. The region is important for recreation, tourism, agriculture, and wildlife, and there is a large conservation education centre*[6]*."* For this site Natural England also set out a number of conservation objectives regarding maintaining or restoring the achievement of Wild Birds Directive for the qualifying features listed below[7]*:*

- A021 Botaurus stellaris; Great bittern (Breeding)
- A037 Cygnus columbianus bewickii; Bewick's swan (Non-breeding)
- A038 Cygnus cygnus; Whooper swan (Non-breeding)
- A050 Anas penelope; Eurasian wigeon (Non-breeding)
- A051 Anas strepera; Gadwall (Non-breeding)
- A056 Anas clypeata; Northern shoveler (Non-breeding)
- A081 Circus aeruginosus; Eurasian marsh harrier (Breeding)
- A082 Circus cyaneus; Hen harrier (Non-breeding)
- A151 Philomachus pugnax; Ruff (Non-breeding)

14. The 2022 evidence pack also says Broadland Ramsar is designated for the following features:

- Floodplain alder woodland
- Floodplain fen
- Wetland invertebrate and plant assemblage
- Wigeon, Mareca penelope – Wintering

15. **The Bure Broads and Marshes** site is a SSSI that overlaps with The Broads and Broadland designations. The Bure Marshes is also a National Nature Reserve (NNR). It is within the designated area to the south of the boundary. The site is recognised as a wetland site of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. This nationally and internationally important wetland complex is situated on fenland peats in the floodplain of the River Bure between Wroxham and South Walsham. It forms an excellent example of unreclaimed marshland supporting a wide range of plant communities which are typical of Broadland. A notable feature is the extensive area of alder carr woodland which is better developed here than in the other Broadland valleys and the site now forms

[6] Broadland | Ramsar Sites Information Service
[7] European Site Conservation Objectives for Broadland SPA - UK9009253 (naturalengland.org.uk)

probably the finest example of swamp alder carr in Britain. Open areas of fen vegetation are still regularly cut for reed, sedge, marsh hay and species rich fen communities have developed which include many rare plants. Nutrient enrichment of the open waters irrigated by the River Bure has caused the virtual elimination of the former diverse assemblages of water plants but recent restoration experiments at Cockshoot Broad and on fen dykes have encouraged water plants to return. There is considerable invertebrate and bird interest; several uncommon relict fen species have been recorded and there is a population of the rare Swallowtail butterfly. The large areas of undisturbed carr and fen attract many breeding birds including several rare marshland species. It is included within the Broads Environmentally Sensitive Area.

16. Swamp alder carr occurs on unstable muds and peat through which there are vertical fluctuations in the water-level. The open fen communities are dominated by Reed Phragmites australis, Saw Sedge Cladium mariscus or Purple Small-reed Calamagrostis canescens. The principal open waters are Hoveton Great Broad, Decoy Broad, Ranworth Broad and Cockshoot Broad. The three former are directly connected to the enriched river water and there has been a dramatic decline of the water-plants in all these broads over the last 30 years. The invertebrate fauna of the marshes is very rich and includes a wide range of relict fen species. Periodic flooding maintains conditions suitable for a number of Britains rarest aquatic insects. Further detail of the species which reside in this site are detailed in Natural England documents[8].

17. According to Natural England[9] the site was designated in 1991 for its biological interest and is 741ha in size. There are currently 6 pressures on site as of May 2025 including water abstraction scrub encroachment, drainage, other sources of water pollution and siltation[10] and around 70% of the site is within unfavourable condition[11].

18. As well as this within 20km of the Neighbourhood Plan area, there are a number of additional important International designations. This includes:

    - Breydon Water (Ramsar and SPA)
    - Greater Wash (SPA)
    - Great Yarmouth North Denes (SPA)
    - Norfolk Valley Fens (SAC)
    - Paston Great Barn (SAC)
    - River Wensum (SAC)
    - Winterton-Horsey Dunes (SAC)

[8] https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1000880.pdf
[9] The Broads Special Area of Conservation/Broadland Ramsar Evidence Pack. 2022. Source: Natural England Access to Evidence - Search Results page 1
[10] https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SitePressures.aspx?SiteGuid=0eae95e3-5a50-e411-a6ba-000d3a2004ef&SiteCode=S1000880&SiteName=Bure%20Broads%20and%20Marshes%20SSSI
[11] Bure Broads and Marshes SSSI. Source: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteFeatureCondition.aspx?SiteCode=S1000880&SiteName=Bure%20Broads%20and%20Marshes%20SSSI

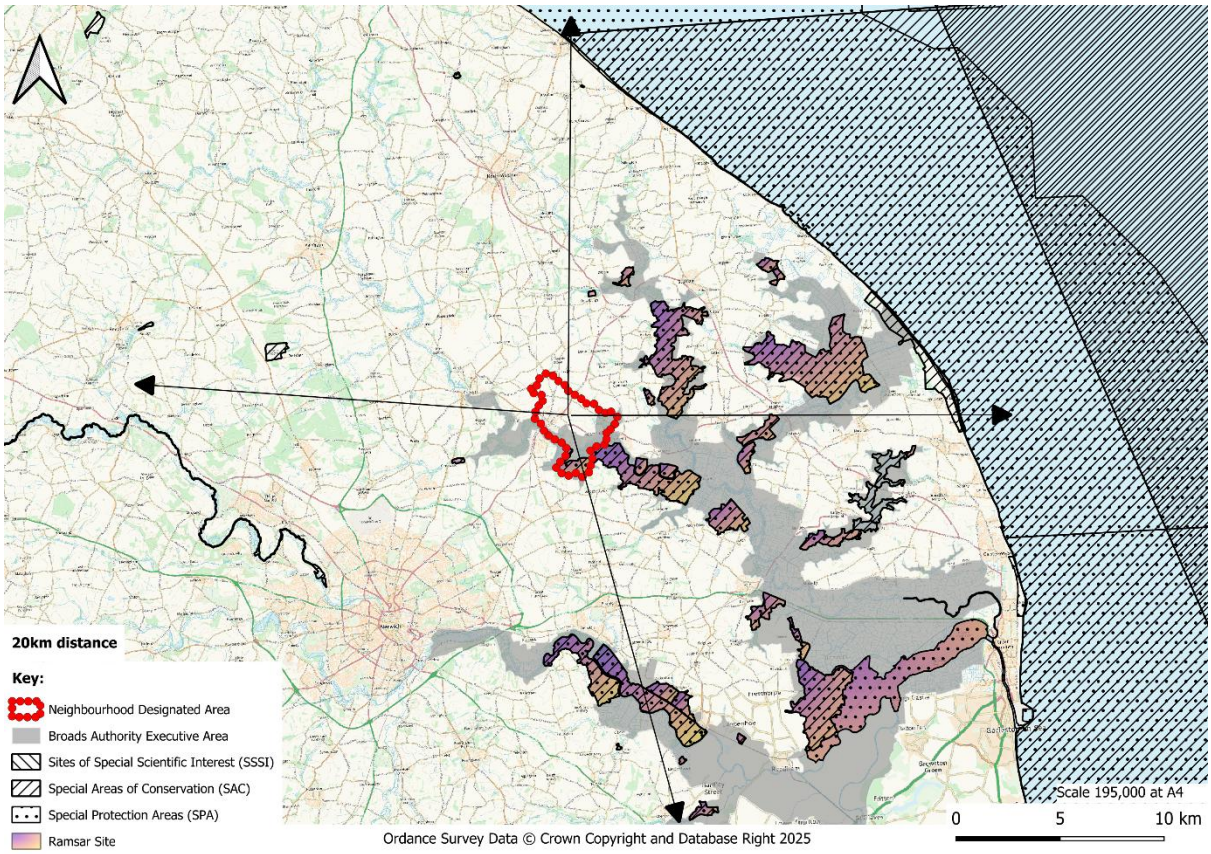


Figure 3- Wildlife Designations within 20km distance of Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan Area

National and Local Designations

19. There are two County Wildlife Sites that falls within the neighbourhood area to the north called Larch & Fleece Plantations and Square Covert shown in **Figure 4**. These wildlife sites are not designated on a statutory basis, though they do receive a degree of protection through the planning process and are often recognised in district local plans. In this context, site protection relies on the commitment of local authorities and public bodies.

20. The parish contains priority habitat also known as Habitats of Principle Importance for biodiversity conservation. These are habitats which are most threatened, in greatest decline, or where the UK holds a significant proportion of the world's total population. There are five main types of priority habitat in the parish (see **Figure 4**) including deciduous woodland, good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland fens, purple moor grass and rush pastures and traditional orchard. Deciduous woodland accounts for 39% of the total priority habitats resource in England[12], the largest proportion of any habitat group, and this is the most apparent priority habitat in Hoveton. There are also small areas where no main habitat occurs, but additional habitats are present.

[12] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/654df579c0e06800101b2d2b/2a_Extent_and_condition_of_priority_habitats.pdf

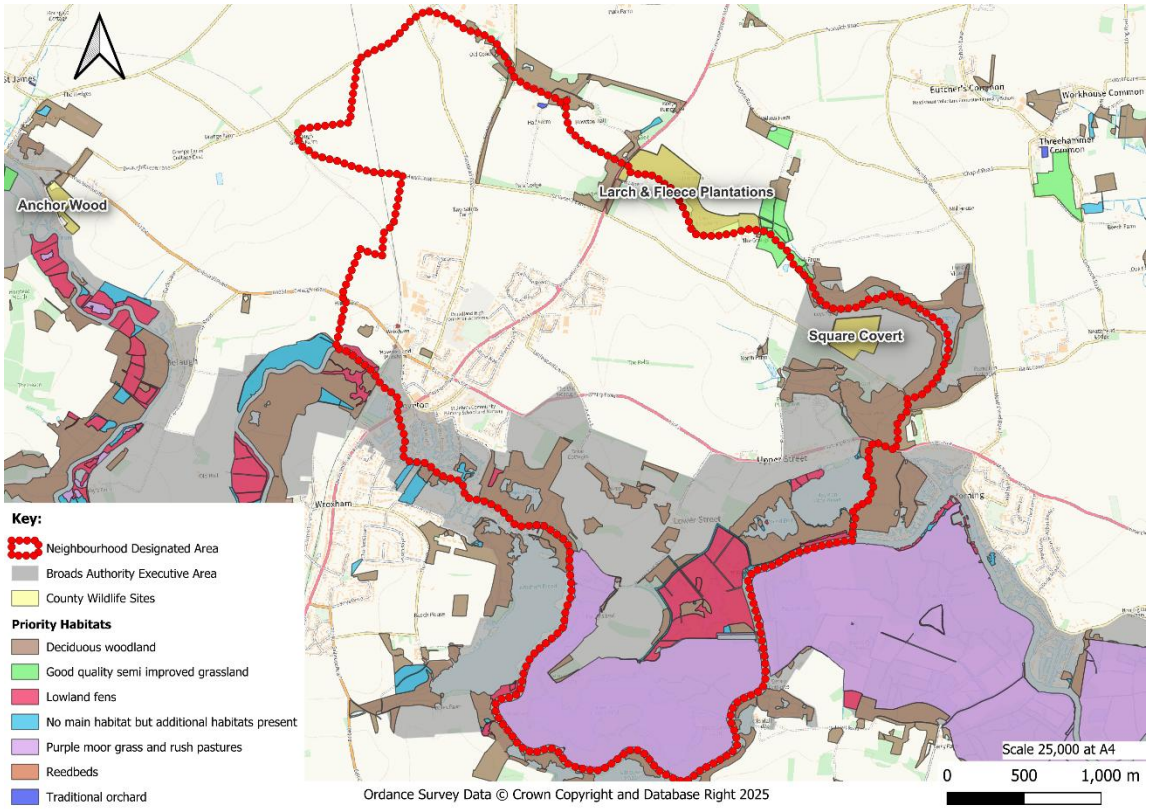


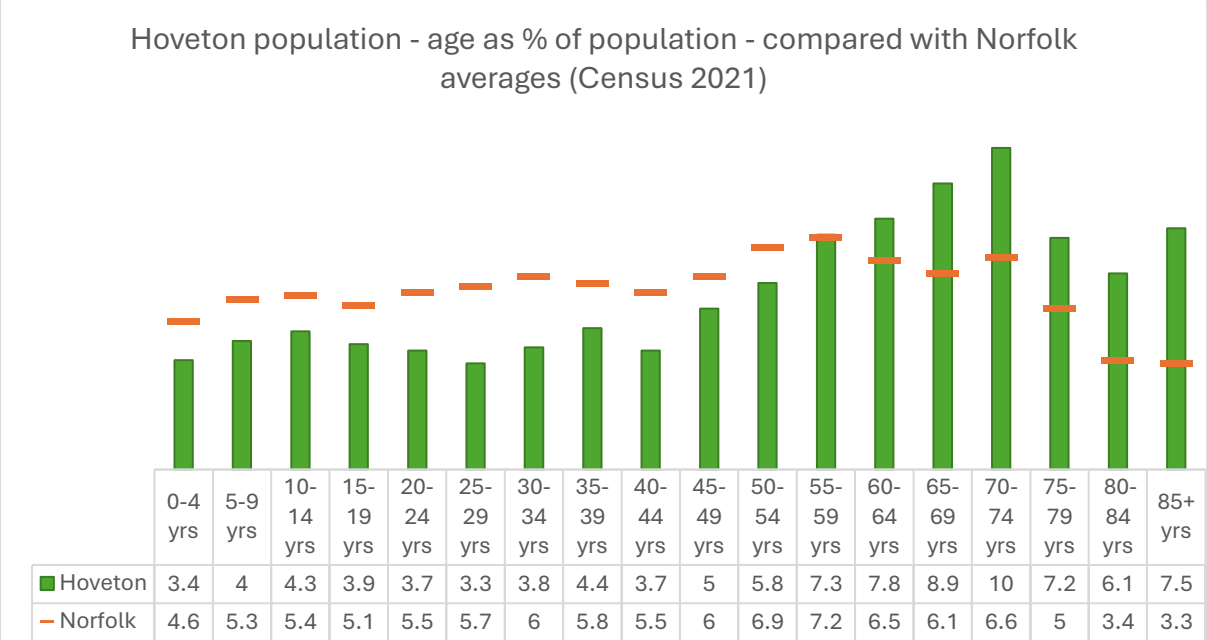
Figure 4-County Wildlife Sites and Priority Habitats (Source Norfolk County Council, 2025)

Population

21. According to the 2021 Census, the total resident population of Hoveton is 2,100[13] which is an increase of almost 20% (341) since the 2011 Census when the population was 1,759[14]. The parish is small in comparison to the 916,1000 people residing in Norfolk and 56,490,000 in England. Census data also shows the population is fairly evenly balanced between male and female residents with males making up 48% of the local population and females 52%[15]. There was a small change from 2011 when the proportions were 47%/53%[16].

22. Census data shows that Hoveton has an older age profile when compared to the rest of Norfolk with above an average proportion of the population over the age of 60, and below average proportion aged 54 and under (**Figure 5**). Over the ten years between the 2011 and 2021 Census, there have been some small changes in Hovetons age profile which can be seen in the **Figure 6**. There has been some growth in the 0-24 age group and slight drops in 25-64 and 75+ groups.

[13] Census 2021. Population. Source: Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS
[14] Census 2011. Nomis Local Area Report for Hoveton. Source: Local Area Report for areas in England and Wales - Nomis (nomisweb.co.uk)
[15] Census 2021. Population. Source: Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS
[16] Census 2011. Nomis Local Area Report for Hoveton. Source: Local Area Report for areas in England and Wales - Nomis (nomisweb.co.uk)



	0-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	15-19 yrs	20-24 yrs	25-29 yrs	30-34 yrs	35-39 yrs	40-44 yrs	45-49 yrs	50-54 yrs	55-59 yrs	60-64 yrs	65-69 yrs	70-74 yrs	75-79 yrs	80-84 yrs	85+ yrs
Hoveton	3.4	4	4.3	3.9	3.7	3.3	3.8	4.4	3.7	5	5.8	7.3	7.8	8.9	10	7.2	6.1	7.5
Norfolk	4.6	5.3	5.4	5.1	5.5	5.7	6	5.8	5.5	6	6.9	7.2	6.5	6.1	6.6	5	3.4	3.3

Figure 5-Hoveton population age profile vs Norfolk - Census 2021

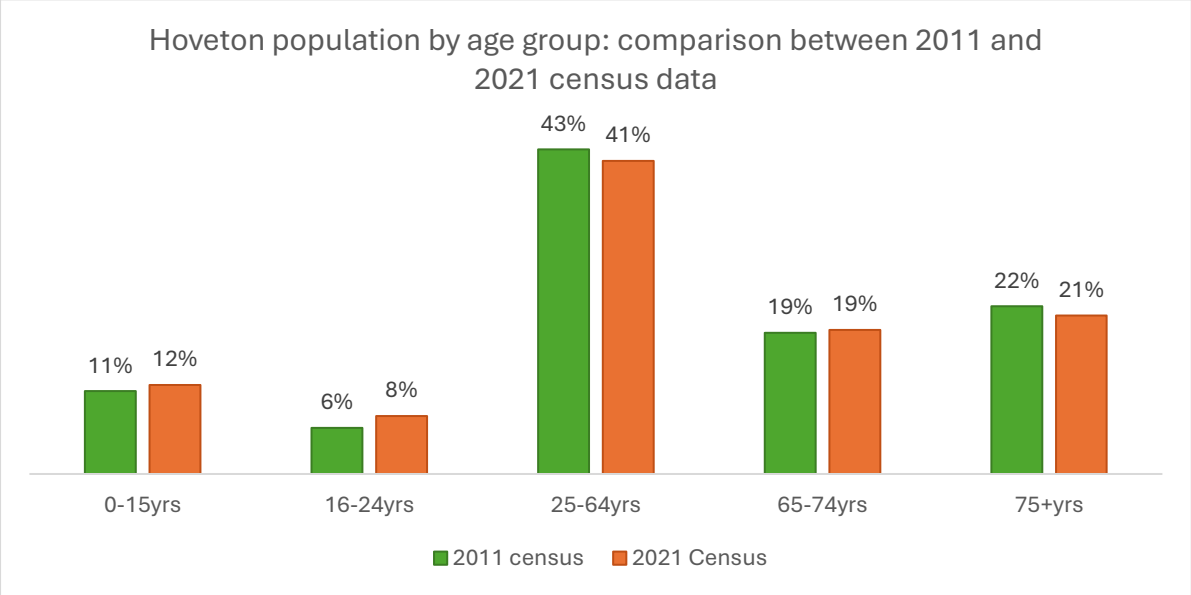


Figure 6- Hoveton population age profile 2011 vs 2021 (Census data)

Human Health

23. Provision of age-related services is likely to become an increasing consideration for the neighbourhood plan area as the proportion of over 65s according to the Census 2021 makes up 40% of the NPA.

Soil

24. The parish contains some of the best and most versatile agricultural land in England, as identified by the Agricultural Land Classification Scale. Of the areas not

covered by urban settlement or non-agricultural land a large proportion is identified as Grade 2 and Grade 3 particularly within the centre and north, see **Figure 7**.

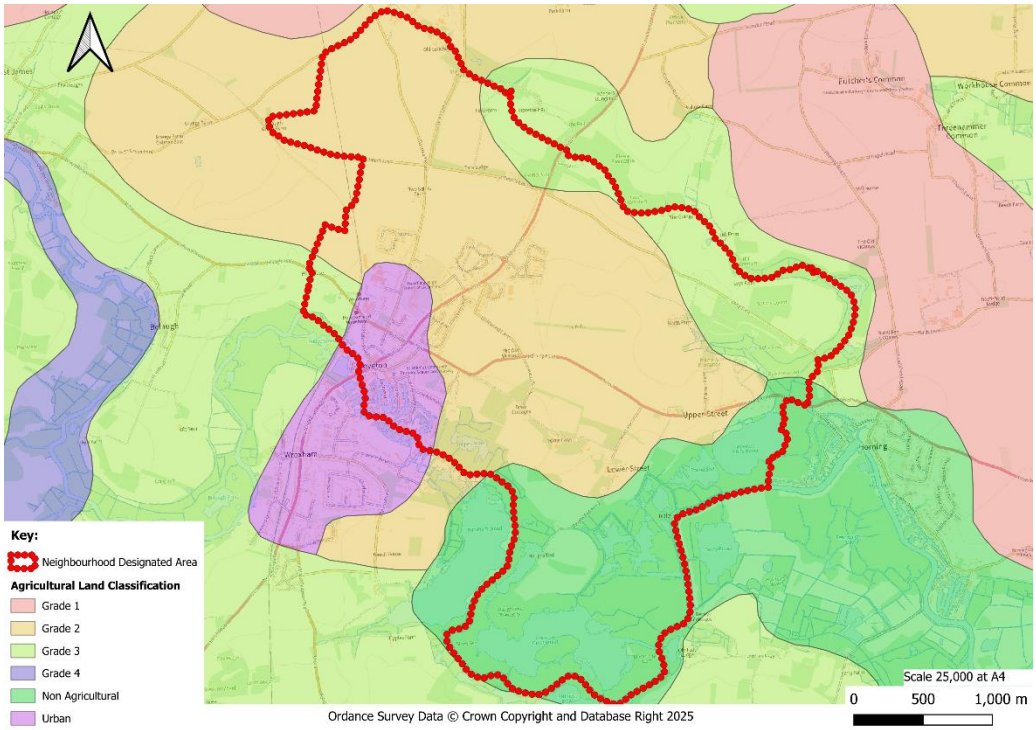


Figure 7-Agricultural Land Classification (Source: Natural England, 2025)

Water

25. According to the Environment Agency most of the parish including most of the built-up area is not at risk from flooding from rivers and sea. There are areas at higher risk - these are exclusively areas immediately close to the river (**Figure 8**).

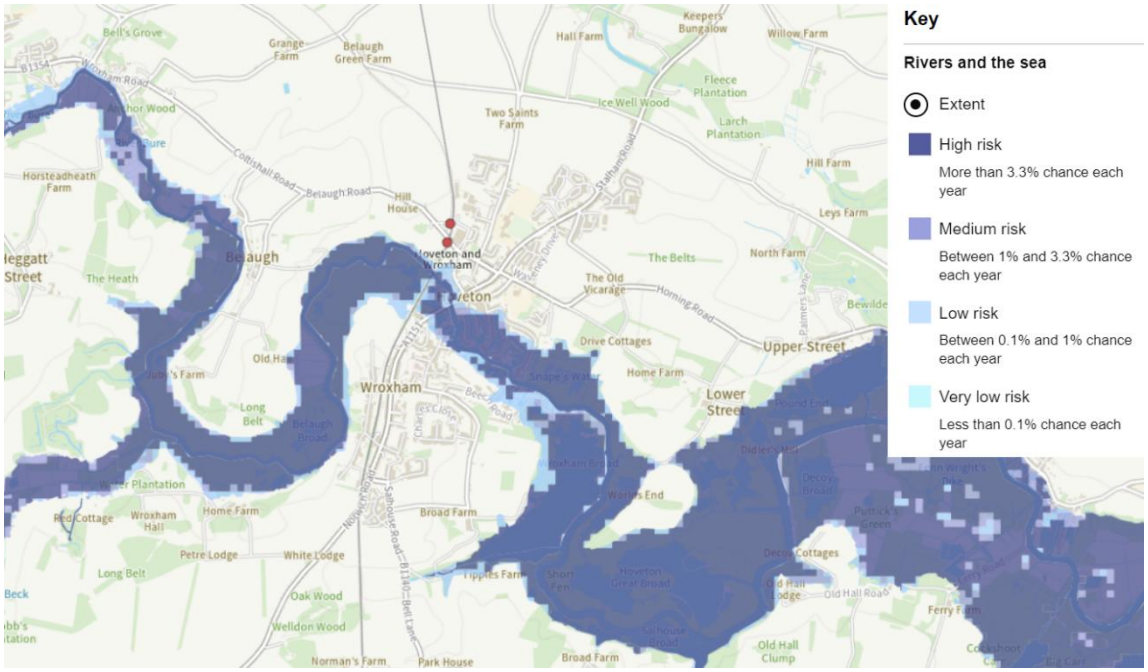


Figure 8-Flood risk from rivers and sea in Hoveton (Source: DEFRA, 2025[17])

The Environment Agency future flood risk modelling shows that there is a low, medium, and high risk of surface water flooding (ponding) in areas of the parish, including around existing buildings, roads, gardens, open landscape, and waterbodies. **Figures 9 to 10** show that parts of Waveney Drive, Station Road, and Three Acre Close as well as many places close to the river area are of a higher surface water flood risk.

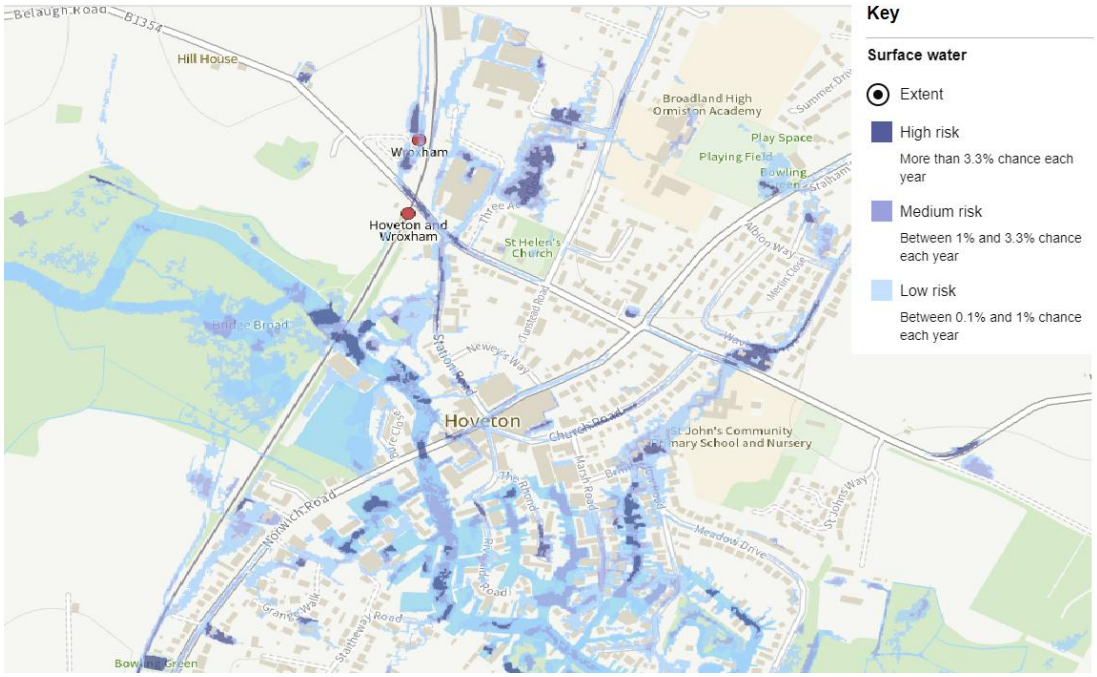


Figure 9- Surface Water Flood Risk (Source: DEFRA, 2025)

[17] Technical map - Check your long term flood risk - GOV.UK

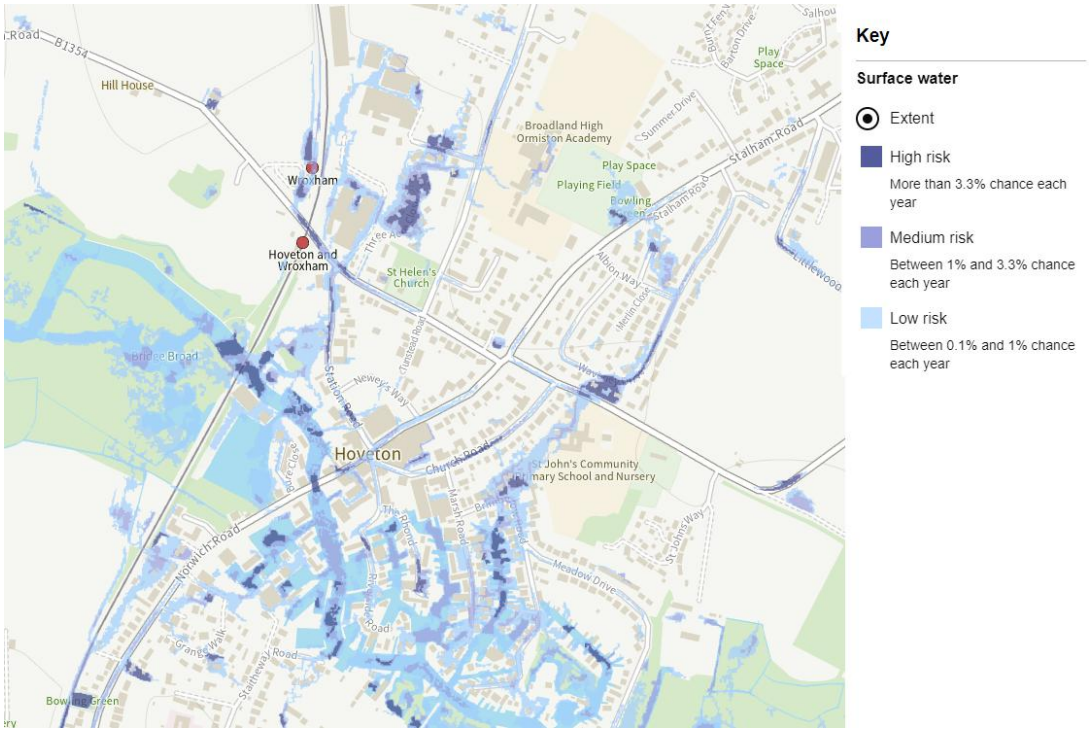


Figure 10-Surface Water Flood Risk within the built-up area of Hoveton (Source: DEFRA, 2025)

26. The North Norfolk Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2018[18]) states that in Hoveton flood risk is associated with a combination of fluvial and tidal influences along the River Bure to the south of the settlement; much of this area is within the Flood Zone 3 extent, notably around Riverside Road, The Rhond, Marsh Road, Brimbelow Road and Meadow Drive. Tidal flooding is the most significant flood risk in the district as North Norfolk is bounded to the north and east by the North Sea and many of its watercourses are tidally influenced. The Broads river network is dominated by a tidal influence which typically causes flooding to be gradual and relatively predictable. Rivers not being able to flow freely at high tide (called tide-locking) is also an issue within North Norfolk. Tide-locking affects the lower reaches of the River Glaven and River Stiffkey as well as the settlements of Hoveton and Horning along the River Bure. Tide-locking has the potential to increase levels in the River Bure at Hoveton.

27. The North Norfolk Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2018) states mapping shows surface water flood risk consists predominantly of isolated surface water ponding on roads, gardens and other open spaces and follows the topographical flow paths of existing watercourses in the 3.3% event. Properties are shown to be within the extents of the 1% event, around Three Acre Close. In the 0.1% AEP event, an overland flow route emanating from Waveney Drive and flowing in a southwest direction towards the River Bure, is shown to affect several properties.

[18]North Norfolk District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. 2018. Source: Home | Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (north-norfolk.gov.uk)

28. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) datasets show there are no flood investigation reports for Hoveton[19].

Air and Climatic Factors

29. As part of the National Air Quality Strategy all local authorities are obliged to establish air quality levels in their area that meet national air quality objectives. If an area does not meet these objectives Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are declared. The North Norfolk District Council Air Quality Annual Status Report (2024) confirms that there are no Air Quality Management Areas in the district[20]. This would suggest that air quality is generally not of a concern in the HNP area.

Material Assets

30. Hoveton has a wide range of local services within the parish, including a Roy's of Wroxham supermarket and a Nisa grocery store, two schools (a primary and a high school), and healthcare facilities such as a GP surgery, pharmacy, dentist, and optician. There is a Post Office offering cash services and an ATM during opening hours, although there are no banks or outdoor-access ATMs in the village. Community spaces include the village hall and outdoor areas such as Riverside Park, Pocket Park, and Granary Staithe, which host regular events including concerts, themed food and music nights, and social activities. Leisure opportunities are strong, with riverside access for boating and paddlesports, and a tourist information centre supporting the area's role as a gateway to the Broads. The nearest library is located across the bridge in Wroxham, and hospital services are accessed in Norwich at the Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital.

31. Public transport provision is good. Hoveton and Wroxham railway station provides regular services on the Bittern Line to Norwich (approximately 15 minutes) and Sheringham, with trains running every 30 minutes at peak times on weekdays. Bus services operate frequently to Norwich and the Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital, with reduced frequency at weekends. The Bure Valley Railway also runs from Hoveton, primarily serving tourism and leisure. Despite this, car ownership is high, with 83% of households having at least one vehicle, and 58% of working residents commuting by car.

32. Walking access to the village centre is strong, and the parish benefits from public rights of way and two long-distance routes—the Bure Valley Path and the Three Rivers Way—providing countryside access, although some routes are fragmented and there is no national cycle route through the parish.

[19] Norfolk County Council Flood Investigation Reports
[20] North Norfolk District Council Air Quality Annual Status Report (2024) Available at: Microsoft Word - ASR North Norfolk 2024

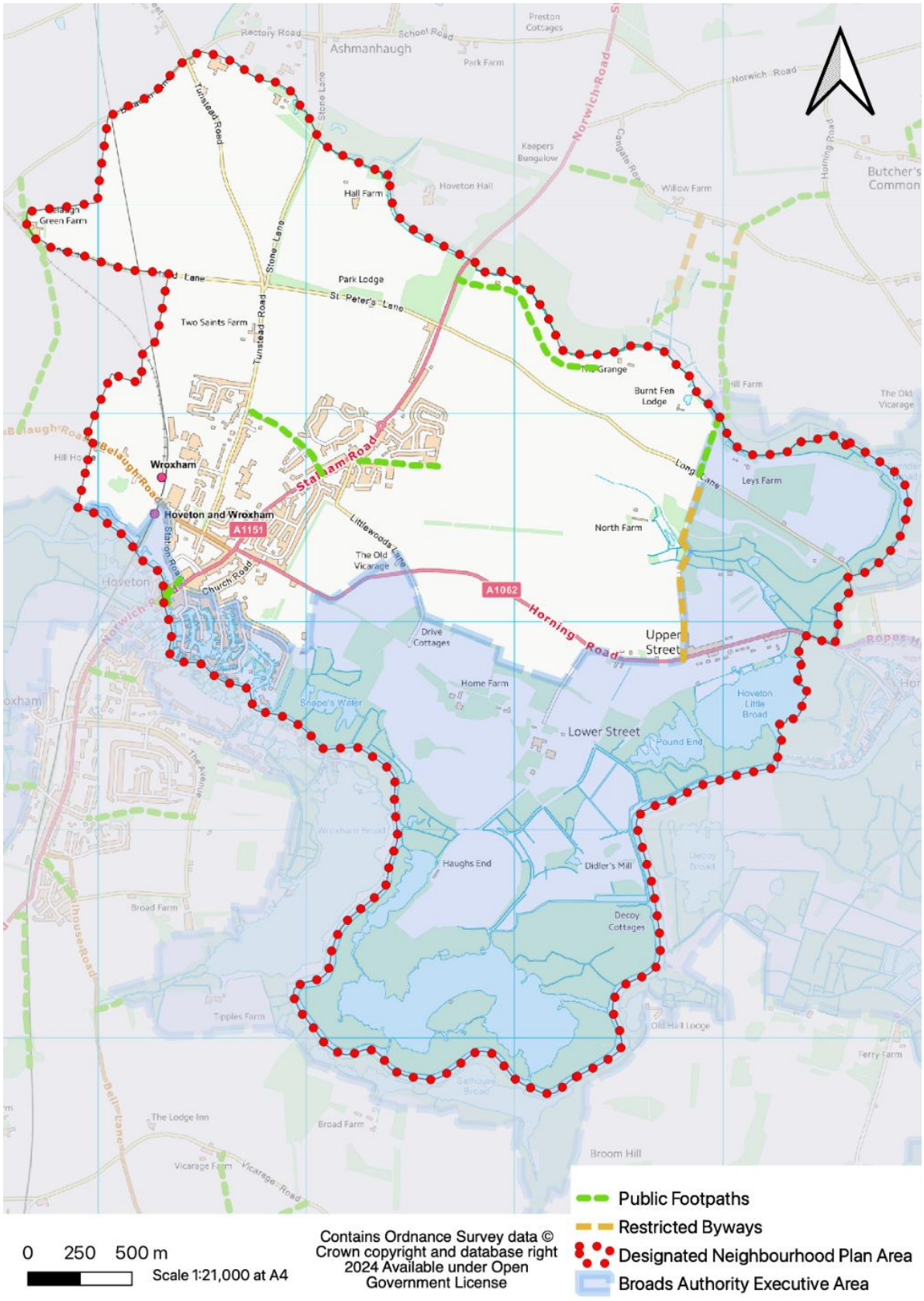


Figure 11-Public Rights of Way within Hoveton (Source: Norfolk County Council, 2025)

Cultural Heritage

33. According to Norfolk Heritage Explorer[21] there are 106 records of historic artefacts, structures, buildings, and marking in the landscape such as crop marks and ditches within the neighbourhood area. These include assets from multiple time periods including the Prehistoric age, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Medieval and post-medieval. Finds have included coins, flint flakes, pottery, signal box and sites of historic buildings.

34. There are 16 listed buildings within the area as identified in **Figure 12.** The majority of the buildings are Grade II or Grade II* listed except Hoveton House which is Grade I [22]. There are no conservation areas, scheduled monuments, battlefields, or other historic designations within the neighbourhood area. However, there are other historic designations adjacent to the south of the designated boundary including the Wroxham and Salhouse Conservation Areas.

[21] https://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/search-results?Parish=HOVETON&Period=0&SearchTxt=&NHER=&FirstRec=1&LastRec=20
[22] The List Search Results for Hoveton | Historic England

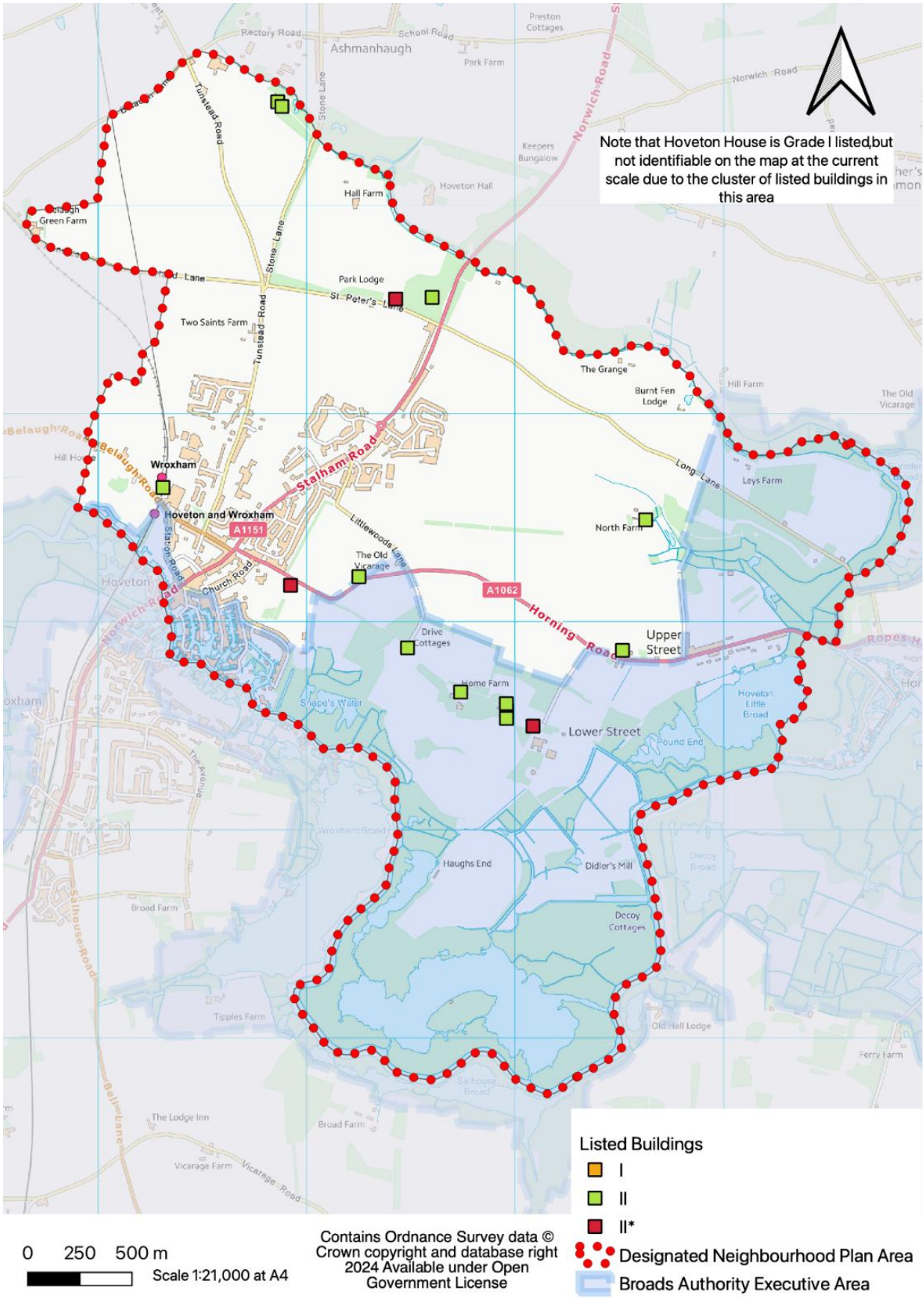


Figure 12- Heritage Assets within and around Hoveton (Source: Historic England 2025)

Landscape

35. The parish falls mainly inside the Low Plains Farmland (LPF) character area within the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment[23]. Although part of the area to the north looks to fall inside the River Valleys (RV2). **Figure 13** marks with an approximate circle where the neighbourhood area is within the context of the North Norfolk Landscape Character areas[24]. The Low Plains Farmland is characterised by a flat or gently undulating open landscape with long, uninterrupted views, predominantly arable land use and dispersed rural settlements. The River Valleys characteristics relevant to Hoveton include nucleated settlement pattern alongside the Bure.

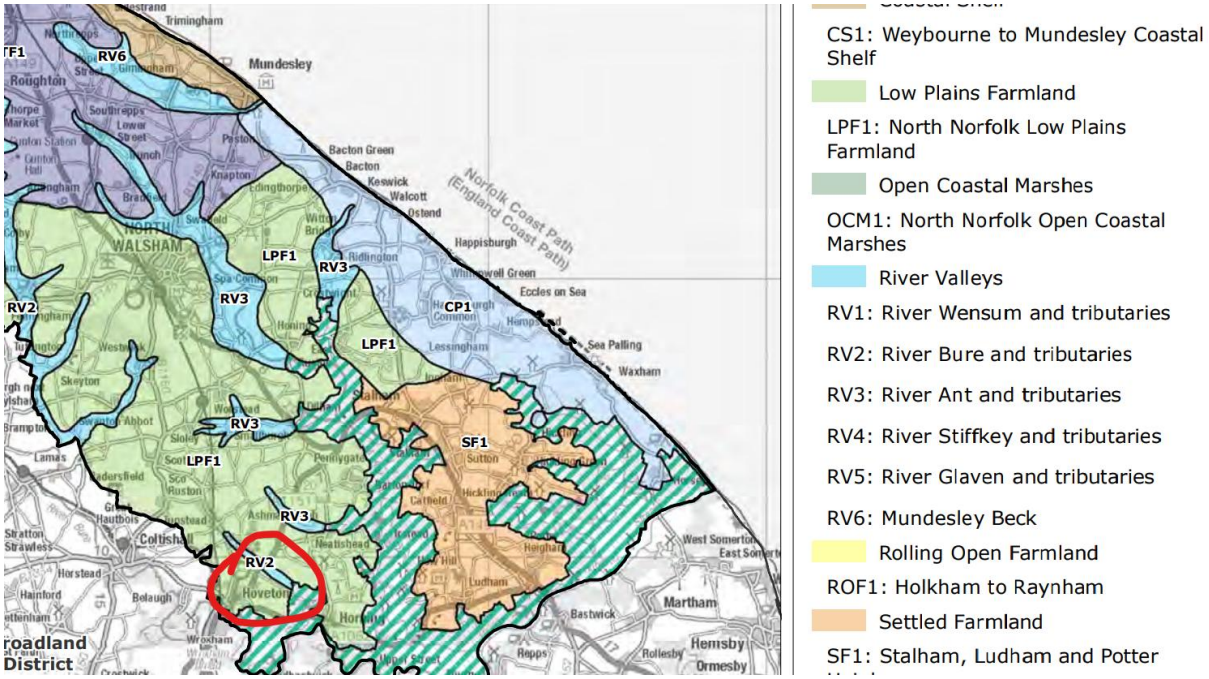


Figure 13-Hoveton location within the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment Map (Source: North Norfolk District Council, Landscape Character Assessment SPD 2021)

36. The Landscape Character Assessment provides a vision and development guidelines for each character type and the relevant details for each type in Hoveton is summarised below:

Low Plains Farmland type	River Valleys
Vision: a well-managed and actively farmed rural landscape that makes the most of field margins for biodiversity and contains a	**Vision:** intimate, small-scale landscapes with a wide variety of land uses / habitats, offering a contrast to the more expansive,

[23] North Norfolk District Council. 2021. Landscape Character Assessment. Source: Home | Landscape character assessment (north-norfolk.gov.uk)

[24] Broadland District Council, Landscape Character Assessment SPD 2013. Source: https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/downloads/file/286/landscape-character-assessment-supplementary-planning-document-part-1- and Broadland District Council Landscape Character Assessment SPD (southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

Low Plains Farmland type	River Valleys
mosaic of farmland, heathland and woodland to provide a network of semi-natural features. New development is integrated within the existing settlements where it reinforces traditional character and vernacular. The landscape retains a rural character and dark skies at night.	open, large-scale arable farming and coastal landscapes that surround the valleys. New development should be appropriate in scale, unobtrusive and readily accommodated into its landscape setting. Woodland and hedgerows should be a major landscape element, helping to contain development. The linear valley form should be apparent and should dictate land use and development form. Valley sides should offer some degree of transition between the contrasting scales of the valley floors and surrounding arable farmlands
Guidelines: 1) Conserve and expand areas of woodland and other non-arable habitats. 2) Conserve sense of rurality. 3) Conserve the nucleated character of villages (compact character - avoid linear sprawl). 4) Protect and appropriately manage the historic parks. 5) Prepare for climate change and potential loss of features through new pests and diseases. 6) Retain the character of the skyline (prominence of trees and church towers). 7) Enhance public rights of way - improve access by linking existing rights of way.	**Guidelines:** 1) Maintain the small scale of valley landscapes - ensure any new development is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge. 2) Maintain rural character - ensure new built development respects existing densities and character styles. Impact both by day and night should be a consideration to maintain rural character and dark skies. Avoid road widening and urbanising features such as kerbs, lighting and excessive signage. 3) Integrate valley-side development - use landscaping to limit the visual influence of development that doesn't conform to historic linear patterns. 4) Protect high ecological status and water quality to maintain varied habitats that enhance biodiversity. 5) Protect and manage cultural heritage assets (includes parkland estates, historic villages and churches). 6) Strengthen public access through the valleys, including the fragmented rights of way network, by introducing new links.

37. The Broads Authority's Landscape Character Assessment places Hoveton into category 10: Settled Broads and identifies a number of sub-types including: waterside village settlements, areas of substantial dwellings with large plots, and individual holiday chalets/houses. The Broads Authority identify forces for change for each landscape type and those relevant to the Settled Broad type are summarised below:

A. Effects of climate change and water level rises effecting finished floor levels (overall height of development and plot levels) and access provision

B. Loss of traditional settlement patterns due to continuing pressures for both commercial and residential property
C. Larger residential landholdings being subdivided potentially leading to pressures on mature vegetation
D. The increase size and numbers of boatyard and marina development which has the potential to encroach on the natural/ semi natural environment
E. Settlement expansion and the increased recreational pressures it causes
F. Increased numbers of boat owners who require mooring either in marinas or adjacent to properties
G. Economic pressures for land use change from business purposes e.g. small boatyards to higher value residential/holiday accommodation
H. Re-development of the smaller leisure plots and their chalets to be replaced by larger properties
I. Loss of buffering vegetation between properties or plots
J. The design of buildings and use of building materials which have incongruous effect on the local setting
K. Expansion of leisure facilities presents opportunities for enhancement which need to be balanced with adverse effects

SEA Screening

Legislative Background

38. The European Directive 2001/42/EC[25] is the basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation, which was transposed into English secondary legislation by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 otherwise known as the SEA Regulations. A SEA would be required if the implementation of the contents of the Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan are likely to cause significant environmental effects.

39. The assessment undertaken will follow and answer specific questions using criteria drawn from the European SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 when determining the likely significance of effects as shown in **Figure 14**[26].

40. **Figure 15** presents the flow diagram entitled Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes which is taken from the Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, published in September 2005[27]. **Figure 16** below assesses whether HNP will require a full SEA. The questions in the first column are drawn from **Figure 15** which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

41. An assessment has been undertaken to determine whether the draft HNP requires SEA in accordance with the SEA Regulations. Where the results can be viewed below.

[25] EUR-Lex - 32001L0042 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
[26] The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (legislation.gov.uk)
[27] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf

SCHEDULE 1- CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:

a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of [F1retained EU law] on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
b) the cumulative nature of the effects;
c) the transboundary nature of the effects;
d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—
(i)special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
(ii)exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
(iii)intensive land-use; and
g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

Figure 14-Schedule 1 Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects

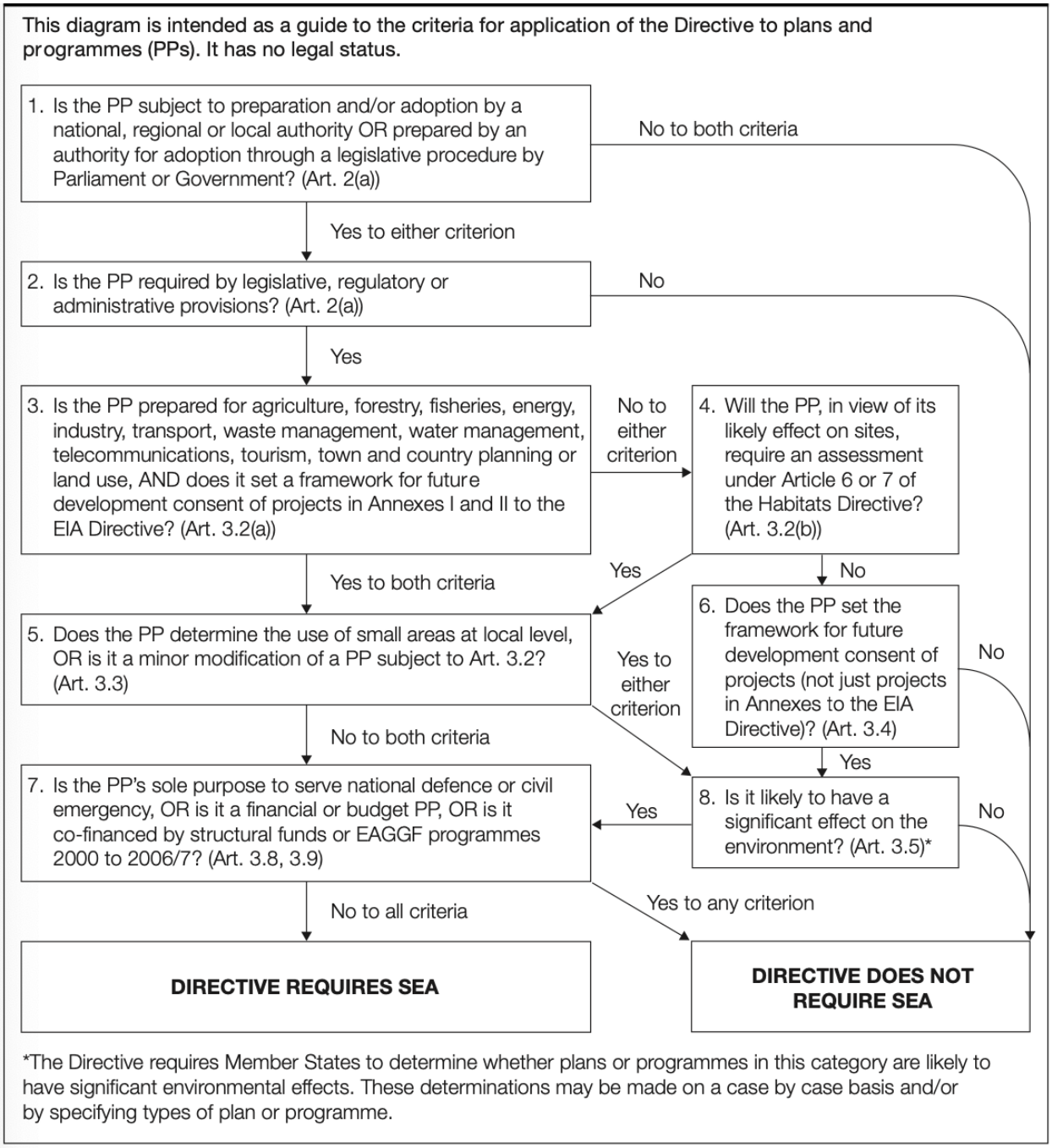


Figure 15-Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

	Stage	Y/N	Justification
1	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government (Art. 2(a))	Y	The NP is being prepared by Hoveton parish council (as the "relevant qualifying body") and will be made by North Norfolk District Council and Broads Authority Executive Area, subject to Hoveton passing an independent examination and successful local community referendum. The preparation of the Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan is allowed under primary legislation: The Town and Country Planning Act (1990) as amended by the Localism Act (2011). The preparation of NP's is subject to several relevant regulations as shown below (not intend to be a complete list): • The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, • the Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012 • the Neighbourhood Planning (General)(Amendment) Regulations 2015 • the Neighbourhood Planning (General)and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016 • the Neighbourhood Planning (General)and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2012 **GO TO QUESTION 2**
2	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Y	Whilst it is not a requirement for a parish to create a Neighbourhood Plan under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) and Localism Act (2011), the NP will eventually be "made" and form part of the Development Plans for North Norfolk District Council and the Broads Authority. The authorities are directed by legislative processes, and it

	Stage	Y/N	Justification
			is important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether an SEA is required under the Directive. **GO TO QUESTION 3**
3	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2(a))	Y	Developments that fall within Annex I are 'excluded' development for Neighbourhood Plans (as set out in Section 61(k) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as subsequently amended)[28] and the Localism Act 2011 Schedule 9 Part 2 Para 7 Section 38 B (1)(b),(6)[29]. A Neighbourhood Plan is prepared for Town and Country Planning and Land use. The Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan can include at a neighbourhood level, through different policy areas, the framework for development that would fall within Annex II of the EIA Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared to set out a framework for town and country planning and land use within the parish of Hoveton. Its intention is to complement the higher order strategic framework that already exists for land use planning across the North Norfolk District and Broads Authority. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to align and be in general conformity with the strategic framework. The Neighbourhood Plan is not allocating any development itself but anticipates being one of the key tools to manage future development with Hoveton.

[28] Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (legislation.gov.uk)
[29] Localism Act 2011 (legislation.gov.uk)

	Stage	Y/N	Justification
			GO TO QUESTION 5
4	Will the Neighbourhood Plan (PP), in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.3)		A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening of the Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken in the next section and has concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site, either alone or in combination. **GO TO QUESTION 6**
6	Does the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)		Although the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development, it includes non-strategic policies which proposals for development within the parish will be assessed against when materially relevant. **GO TO QUESTION 8**
8	Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	N	**SEE FIGURE 15 – PLAN DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA.**

Figure 16-Application of SEA Directive to HNP

PP in this instance refers to Neighbourhood Plan

42. Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects. These are listed in **Figure 17** below along with comments on the extent to which the HNP meets these criteria.

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
Characteristics of the plan and programmes, having regard in particular, to:		
a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	Once made, HNP will become part of the statutory development plan and will guide the delivery of development within the designated plan area. The parish of Hoveton is located within North Norfolk District and the Broads Authority. The North Norfolk Local Plan designates Hoveton as a small growth town[30]. This is because "although Hoveton is a village, rather than a town, its size, particularly taken with Wroxham (in Broadland District), means that it acts as a local retail and service centre." Small growth towns are to provide around 13.6% of housing growth within the Plan period. In the North Norfolk Local Plan there are two allocations within Hoveton. This includes HV01/C – Land East of Tunstead Road and HV06/A- Land at Stalham Road. • HV01/C is to provide approximately 150 dwellings, 60 units/40 dwellings equivalent of elderly care accommodation open space and supporting infrastructure. • HOV06/A is to provide approximately 50 dwellings, open space and supporting infrastructure. The Broads Authority Local Plan allocates brownfield land off Station	**N**

[30] Local Plan Further Consultation (to address the Planning Inspectors interim findings)

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
	Road for mixed-use redevelopment under Policy POHOV3 (Brownfield land off Station Road, Hoveton). This includes the former Broads Hotel Cottage, the Waterside Rooms, and the cottages and stable block adjacent to the King's Head pub. **In terms of the degree to which HNP sets a framework, it does not allocate land for development.**	
b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted alongside the higher order adopted Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework and form part of the District Council's Development Plans. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity to the strategic framework and will expand upon some of the Local Plan policies, providing supplementary information on a local scale. It does not have an influence over other plans. However, once made HNP will form part of the statutory development plans for Hoveton and will be used in conjunction with the current development plans to determine planning applications.	**N**
c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	One of the Basic Conditions which HNP must meet is to contribute towards sustainable development. Given the non-strategic nature of the HNP this does not have the potential to restrict the delivery of other plans or programmes.	**N**

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	Baseline information relating to HNP was described earlier in this Screening Document. There are a few European statutory designated sites in the neighbourhood area. These include: • **The Broads** Special Area of Conservation (SAC) • **Broadland** Ramsar and Special Protection Area (SPA) • **Bure Broads and Marshes** Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) **The plan itself will not specifically allocate land for development and will not exacerbate any significant known environmental problems.**	**N**
e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (eg plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	The implementation of community legislation is unlikely to be significantly compromised by the Neighbourhood Plan.	**N**
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to		
a) The probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects	HNP does not contain any site-specific development proposals that will result in complex, widespread, long lasting, or serious environmental effects.	**N**
b) The cumulative nature of the effects	As it will not allocate land for development HNP will not lead to any cumulative effects in combination with existing or emerging plans.	**N**

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
c) Transboundary nature of effects	The HNP area provides supplementary policy areas on a local scale such as design. The impacts for transboundary effects beyond the parish are unlikely to be significant.	**N**
d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	HNP is unlikely to produce any significant effects to human health or the environment.	**N**
e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The HNP area has a total population of around 2,100 (Census 2021). This sits within the context of a total population of 103,000 in North Norfolk district. HNP remains a non-strategic plan and the principle of development that will take place has already been established within the North Norfolk Local Plan and Broads Local Plan.	**N**
f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to – i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or iii. Intensive land-use	i) There are a few national statutory natural designations which fall within Hoveton. Regarding cultural heritage, there are 16 statutory listed buildings within the neighbourhood plan area according to the latest data on the Historic England website. As the plan does not allocate land for development it is not expected to have likely significant effects on the natural and cultural characteristics of the area. ii) HNP is unlikely to result in exceedance of environmental quality standards, such as those	**N**

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
	relating to air, water, and soil quality. iii) HNP is unlikely to bring forward development to an extent that would result in a significant intensification of Local land Use. **The emerging HNP does not include site allocations and therefore are not anticipated to have likely significant effects on the parish.**	
g) The effects on areas of landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	Part of the Neighbourhood Plan Area does have recognised international, national, and local protection status. To the south of the parish is The Broads (SAC), Broadland (SPA; Ramsar) and Bure Broads and Marshes (SSSI) designations. The Bure Broads is also a National Nature Reserve. There are two country wildlife sites and five different types of priority habitat in the parish. HNP is not anticipated to have likely significant effects on designated landscapes given it will not allocate land for development. The environmental effects on areas of international and national status have been considered and examined through the Local Plans.	**N**

Figure 17-Likely Significant Effects

SEA Screening Conclusion

43. A Screening Assessment has been undertaken by applying the criteria from the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations to determine whether or not the HNP is likely to have significant environmental effects when assessed against the topics listed in the SEA Regulations.

44. HNP will set out a vision and non-strategic planning policies to shape development in Hoveton up to 2040. The plan does not allocate sites for development.

45. **On this basis, it is considered that HNP does not have the potential to have significant environmental impacts, and SEA is not required.**

HRA Screening Assessment

What is a Habitats Regulation Assessment?

46. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is the process by which a 'competent authority' is required to assess the potential impacts of plans and projects (such as Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans or development proposals put forward in planning applications) on International Sites in accordance with Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). A competent authority, such as the Local Planning Authority, must determine if a plan or project may affect the protected features set out in the Conservation Objectives of an International habitat site before deciding whether to undertake, permit or authorise it.

What are the International (European) Designated Sites?

47. There are three types of International Sites designations:

- **Ramsar:** Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance, designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands[31].
- **Special Area of Conservation (SAC):** Areas which have been given special protection for a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats.
- **Special Protection Area (SPA):** Identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within EU countries.

Screening

48. To fulfil the legal requirements if likely significant effects will occur with the implementation of the HNP upon the International Sites (Natura 2000 sites) an initial screening assessment has been undertaken which is the first stage of the HRA process. If any likely significant effects on International Sites will occur then the screening is followed by an appropriate assessment (second stage of the HRA process) which needs to consider these impacts in more detail and what mitigation measures, if any, can be achieved to address these[32].

49. The purpose of the Screening stage is to:

- Identify all features of the HNP that would have **no effect** on an International/ European site. These features can be eliminated from further consideration in respect of this and other plans.
- Identify all aspects of the HNP that would **not be likely to have a significant effect** on an International/European site (i.e. would have some effect because of links/connectivity but the effect is not significant), either alone or in combination

[31] The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It is named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the Convention was signed in 1971. It came into force in 1975.
[32] Habitats regulations assessments: protecting a European site - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

with other aspects of the same plan or other plans or projects. These do not require 'Appropriate Assessment'.

- Identify those aspects of the HNP where it is **not possible to rule out the risk of significant effects** on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This provides a clear scope for the parts of the plan that will require Appropriate Assessment.

Case Law and the Interpretation of 'likely significant effects'

50. Before undergoing the assessment, it is useful to reflect on relevant case law to help interpret when effects should be considered as a likely significant effect, when carrying out HRA of a neighbourhood plan. In the Waddenzee case[33] the European Court of Justice ruled on the interpretation of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (translated into Reg. 105 in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017[34]):

    "An effect should be considered 'likely', "if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on the site" (paragraph 45). An effect should be considered 'significant', "if it undermines the conservation objectives" (paragraph 48). Where a plan or project has an effect on a site "but is not likely to undermine its conservation objectives, it cannot be considered likely to have a significant effect on the site concerned" (paragraph 47)."

51. As well as this another relevant opinion delivered to the Court of Justice of the European Union stated: *"The requirement that an effect in question be 'significant' exists in order to lay down a de minimis threshold. Plans or projects that have no appreciable effect on the site are thereby excluded. If all plans or projects capable of having any effect whatsoever on the site were to be caught by Article 6(3), activities on or near the site would risk being impossible by reason of legislative overkill (Paragraph 48).[35]"*

52. This opinion on the interpretation of significant effects in the 'Sweetman' case allows for the authorisation of plans and projects whose possible effects, alone or in combination, can be considered de minimis; referring to such cases as those "that have no appreciable effect on the site". In practice such effects that could be screened out as having no likely significant effect would be 'insignificant'. The HRA Screening assessment therefore considers whether the Pre-Submission Draft of Hoveton Neighbourhood Plan and its policies could have likely significant effects either alone or in combination.

[33] Case C-127/02 Landelijke Vereniging tot Behoud van de Waddenzee and Nederlandse Vereniging tot Bescherming van Vogels vStaatssecretaris van Landbouw, Natuurbeheer en Visserij. Directive 92/43/EEC – Conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna – Concept of 'plan' or 'project' – Assessment of the implications of certain plans or projects for the protected site Source: EUR-Lex - 62002CJ0127 - EN - EUR-Lex

[34] The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

[35] Case C-258/11 Peter Sweetman Ireland Attorney General Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government v An Bord Pleanala (Reference for a preliminary ruling from the Supreme Court (Ireland)) (Environment – Special conservation areas – Assessment of the impact of a plan or project on a protected site – Adverse effect on the integrity of the site). Source: CURIA - Documents

Assessment

53. Firstly, it is established practice in HRA to identify any International/European Sites that could possibly be affected within the area covered by the plan proposal and other sites that may be affected beyond this area. In this screening assessment the area screened was the HNP designated area as well as a distance of 20 kilometres (km) taken from the centre of HNP as shown in **Figure 19**. A distance of 20 kilometres from the centre point of the HNP area was used in the first instance because this has been agreed with Natural England for the relevant Local Plans HRAs in this region[36] and is considered precautionary. In line with HRA requirements, the application of a 20-kilometre buffer is considered a highly precautionary distance with relation to potential impacts to the surrounding area.

54. The assessment also considers areas that may be functionally linked to the International/European sites. The term 'functional linkage' refers to the role or 'function' that land or sea beyond the boundary of a European site might fulfil in terms of ecologically supporting the populations for which the site was designated or classified. Such land is therefore 'linked' to the European site in question because it provides an important role in maintaining or restoring the population of qualifying species at favourable conservation status[37].

55. Whilst the boundary of an International/European site will usually be drawn to include key supporting habitat for a qualifying species, this cannot always be the case where the population for which a site is designated or classified is particularly mobile. Individuals of the population will not necessarily remain in the site all the time. The mobility of qualifying species is considerable and may extend so far from the key habitat that forms the designated area (SAC or SPA) that it would be entirely impractical to attempt to designate or classify all of the land or sea that may conceivably be used by the species.

56. **In the HNP area there are two designated International/European sites**. This screening assessment has also considered the impact on International Sites within a 20km radius of the HNP area as an in-combination assessment (**Figure 18**). The point for measuring 20km has been taken from the centre of HNP as shown in **Figure 19**. A number of International Sites are shown to be located within 20km radius of the HNP area including:

[36]North Norfolk Local Plan HRA Proposed Submission Version Report 2022. Source: Habitats Regulations Assessment - North Norfolk Local Plan (Reg 19) Publication

[37] Functional linkage: How areas that are functionally linked to European sites have been considered when they may be affected by plans and projects - a review of authoritative decisions - NECR207 (naturalengland.org.uk)

Special Areas of Conservation	Special Protection Areas	Ramsar Sites
• Broadland • Greater Wash • Great Yarmouth North Denes • Norfolk Valley Fens • The Broads • Paston Great Barn • River Wensum • Winterton-Horsey Dunes	• Broadland • Breydon Water • Greater Wash • Great Yarmouth North Denes	• Broadland • Breydon Water

Figure 18- Table of the International Designated Wildlife Sites within 20km radius of HNP

57. Natural England provides detailed information about the European Sites with reference to Standard Data Forms for the SPA sites and Natural England's Site Improvement Plans[38]. Natural England's conservation objectives[39] for the SPA sites have also been reviewed when writing this report. These state that site integrity must be maintained or restored by maintaining or restoring the habitats of qualifying features, the supporting processes on which they rely, and populations of qualifying species.

58. As required under Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), an assessment has been undertaken of the potential 'likely significant effects' of the plan. The assessment has been prepared in order to identify which policies would be likely to have a significant effect on European sites. The Screening assessment has been conducted without taking mitigation into account, in accordance with the 'People Over Wind' judgment which took place in April 2018[40].The judgment clarified that when making screening decisions for the purposes of deciding whether an appropriate assessment is required, competent authorities cannot take into account any mitigation measures in neighbourhood plans, permissions in principle and certain development orders[41].

[38] Natural England Access to Evidence - Site Improvement Plans: East of England
[39] Natural England Access to Evidence - Conservation Objectives for European Sites
[4040] The Court of Justice of the European Union delivered its judgment in Case C-323/17 People Over Wind & Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta ('People over Wind').
[41] GOV. Para 009 . Source: Appropriate assessment - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

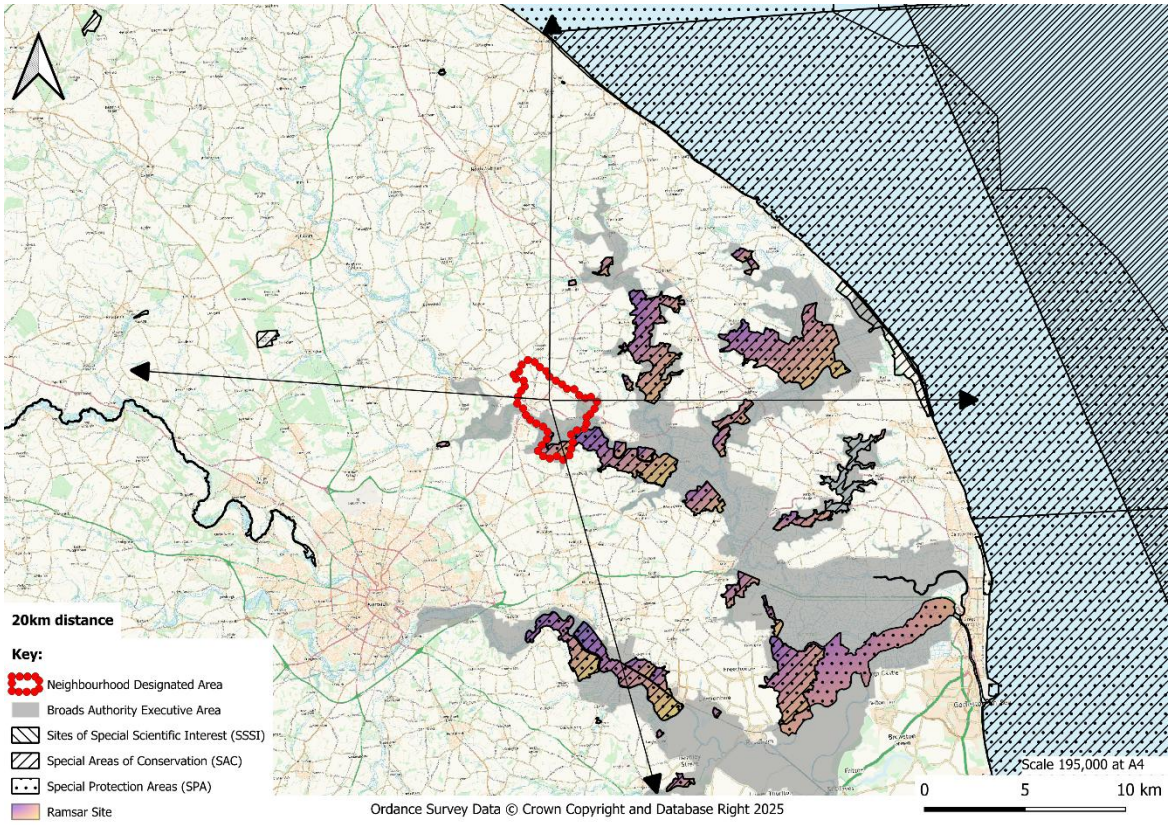


Figure 19- Map of the International Designated Wildlife Sites within 20km radius of HNP

59. Each European site has a set of interest features which are the ecological features for which the site is designated or classified, and the features for which Member States should ensure the site is maintained or where necessary restored. European sites are at risk if there are possible means by which any aspect of a plan or project can, when being taken forward for implementation, pose a potential threat to the wildlife interest of the sites. This is often referred to as the 'impact pathway'. Potential impact pathways causing significant effects are:

    - Physical loss or damage to habitat;
    - Non-physical disturbance (noise, vibration and light pollution);
    - Pollution Impacts (Air, Non-toxic contamination, Wastewater) ;
    - Recreational pressure;
    - Increased pressure on water resources
    - Urban effects

    HRA Impacts Screening

60. A risk-based approach involving the application of the precautionary principle was adopted in the assessment, such that a conclusion of 'no likely significant effect' (LSE) would only be reached where it was considered unlikely, based on current knowledge and the information available, that a HNP policy would have a significant effect on the integrity of a European site. HNP does not allocate land for

development and therefore will not directly result in an increase in the number of new dwellings within the vicinity of European Sites. A summary of findings linked to potential impact pathways are considered in **Figure 20** and an assessment of potential impacts of the draft policies contained within HNP is provided in **Figure 21**.

HRA Impacts Screening

Impact Pathway	Findings
Physical loss or damage to habitat	Habitat loss from development in areas outside of the European site boundaries may result in likely significant effects where that habitat contributes towards maintaining the interest feature for which the European site is designated. This includes land which may provide offsite movement corridors such as sheltering habitat for mobile species Including birds, bats and fish. European sites susceptible to the indirect effects of habitat loss are restricted to those with qualifying species that rely on offsite habitat. As HNP is not allocating any sites for development in the area it is considered there will be no likely significant effects of physical loss or damage to a habitat and is screened out of the assessment.
Non-physical disturbance (noise, vibration and light pollution)	Non-physical disturbance effects such as noise and vibration are most likely to disturb bird species and thus are a key consideration with respect to potential effects on European sites where birds are the qualifying features. Light pollution from artificial lighting at night also has the potential to affect species where it occurs in close proximity to key habitat areas, such as key roosting sites of SPA birds. As HNP is not allocating any sites for development in the area it is considered there will be no likely significant effects of non-physical disturbance to a habitat and is screened out of the assessment.
Non-toxic contamination	A non-toxic environment is understood to be an environment that is free from chemical pollution and of exposures to hazardous chemicals at levels that are harmful to human health and to the environment. An example of non-toxic contamination in the environment is the creation of dust from human activities such as road transport, construction and industry[42]. Dust can smother terrestrial habitats, preventing natural processes, and an

[42] Monitoring ambient air: particulate matter - GOV.UK

Impact Pathway	Findings
	increased sediment can potentially affect the aquatic habitats/species. As HNP is not allocating any sites for development in the area it is considered there will be no likely significant effects of non-contamination and is screened out of the assessment.
Air pollution	There are number of atmospheric pollutants which can result in direct or indirect impacts to Habitats sites. These impacts are usually caused when the qualifying features are plants, soils and wetland habitats. However, some species may also be indirectly impacted from air pollution causing changes in habitat composition. Around the world the primary contributors to atmospheric pollution is transport and industry related activities[43]. The main pollutants to atmospheric pollution are considered to be oxides of nitrogen (NOx) or sulphur dioxide (SO2)[44]. In England, road transport Is a major source of emissions of nitrogen oxides contributing to 30% of emissions In 2022 alone. It has been stated that excess deposition of nitrogen (NOx) compounds may lead to a cascade of environmental problems including both soil and freshwater acidification, the reduction of biodiversity (Zhang et al; 2021[45]) and cause eutrophication of soils and water affecting nutrient levels and reducing the diversity of species in sensitive environments[46]. Based on the 2019 Highways England Design Manual for Road and Bridges (DMRB) LA 105 Air quality[47] (which sets out the requirements for assessing and reporting the effects of highway projects on air quality), the report states that an assessment of the impact of pollutant concentrations on sensitive receptors should be done within 200m from the road itself. As HNP is not allocating any sites for development in the area it is considered there will be no likely significant effects of air pollution on the European Sites and is screened out of the assessment.
Recreational pressure	Recreational activities can result in significant effects on European sites. European sites with qualifying bird species are likely to be particularly susceptible to recreational disturbances

[43] Air quality, energy and health
[44] Emissions of air pollutants in the UK - Summary - GOV.UK
[45] Atmospheric nitrogen deposition: A review of quantification methods and its spatial pattern derived from the global monitoring networks - ScienceDirect
[46] Emissions of air pollutants in the UK - Background - GOV.UK
[47] LA 105 - Air quality (standardsforhighways.co.uk)

Impact Pathway	Findings
	from walking, dog walking, angling, off-road vehicles and motorbikes, wildfowling, and water sports. In addition, recreation can physically damage habitat as a result of trampling, fire or vandalism and also through erosion associated with terrestrial activities. Each European site will typically have a 'Zone of Influence' (ZOI) within which increases in population would be expected to result in likely significant effects. Zones of influence are areas from within which it is deemed there will be likely significant effects arising from additional residents living within the zone and travelling to European sites for recreation. This determines where new development may result in changes in recreation and therefore where mitigation will be necessary. ZOIs were developed for North Norfolk District by setting a series of distance bands around European sites based upon the distance beyond the site boundary which might conceivably be impacted by development within the distributional alternatives, through three main pathways. The ZOI for the European Sites Include[48]: • Broadland (25km) • Breydon Water (30km) • Greater Wash (61km) • Great Yarmouth North Denes (30km) • Norfolk Valley Fens (15km) • The Broads (25km) • Paston Great Barn (20km) • Winteron-Horsey Dunes (30km) HNP is not allocating any sites so a full HRA should be ruled out at this stage.
Changes to hydrology, including water quantity and quality	An increase in demand for water abstraction and treatment resulting from any growth proposed in the HNP area could result in changes in hydrology at European sites. Depending on the qualifying features and particular vulnerabilities of the European sites, this could result in likely significant effects, for example, due to changes in environmental or biotic conditions, water chemistry and the extent and distribution of preferred habitat conditions.

[48] Habitats Regulations Assessment - North Norfolk Local Plan (Reg 19) Publication – Distances set out in Appendix 3

Impact Pathway	Findings
	The HNP does not allocate any development and does not have influence over any development outside of the HNP designated area. Therefore, no likely significant effects will occur from HNP as a result of changes to hydrology either alone or in-combination with other plans and policies.

Figure 20-Summary of Impact Pathways

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects (LSE)	Recommendation at Screening Stage
Policy HNP1: Housing	This policy addresses housing mix with specific regard to the results from the Hoveton Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) 2025 including requirements that ensure future housing development meets the needs of local people.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP2: Land east of Tunstead Road (HVO1/C)	This policy sets out local requirements on the allocated site within the North Norfolk Local Plan.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP3: Land off Stalham Road (HV06/A)	This policy sets out local requirements on the allocated site within the North Norfolk Local Plan.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP4: Brownfield Land off Station Road	This policy sets out local requirements on the allocated site within the Broads Local Plan.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP5: Backland and	This policy sets out criteria where support will be given	No LSE – does not promote	None. This policy does not trigger

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects (LSE)	Recommendation at Screening Stage
Infill Development	to backland and infill development within the settlement boundaries of Hoveton.	development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP6: Design	Requiring high quality design that accords with the Hoveton Design Guide Document 2025.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken.
Policy HNP7: Prioritising Brownfield Development	This policy sets out criteria where support will be given in Hoveton on the redevelopment of brownfield or previously development land.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken.
Policy HNP8: Small Brownfield Sites in the Village Centre	This policy sets out criteria where support will be given in Hoveton on the redevelopment of small brownfield or underused sites within the village centre.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken.
Policy HNP9: Community Facilities	This policy sets out that proposals that would result in the loss of valued community facilities in Hoveton – including the village hall, Broadland Youth & Community Centre, schools, health centre, churches and recreation ground, will only be supported where it meets set criteria. The policy will support proposals for the improvement, expansion or replacement of community	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken.

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects (LSE)	Recommendation at Screening Stage
	facilities where it meets set criteria.		
Policy HNP10: Village Hall and Broadland Youth & Community Centre	This policy sets out proposals involving the redevelopment, expansion or reconfiguration of the Village Hall or BYCC sites will be supported where they meet set criteria.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken.
Policy HNP11: Village Centre Car Parking	This policy sets out that proposals affecting car parking in Hoveton village centre will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken.
Policy HNP12: Safe and Sustainable Transport	This policy sets out that development proposals in Hoveton must demonstrate that they will not worsen existing highway constraints and should contribute to creating a safe, well-connected and low-impact movement network. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP13: Drainage, Wastewater and Nutrient Neutrality	This policy sets out development proposals must demonstrate that foul drainage, wastewater and surface water can be managed safely, sustainably and without harm to the environment. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP14: Digital Connectivity	This policy sets out details that development proposals should consider and provide	No LSE – does not promote development but	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects (LSE)	Recommendation at Screening Stage
	regarding digital infrastructure. This includes providing the necessary physical infrastructure to enable gigabit-capable broadband connections to all new dwellings and business premises. Where direct connection to a fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) network is not immediately available, proposals should demonstrate how the development will be designed to facilitate future upgrades without the need for significant retrofitting. Proposals should also support improved mobile coverage across the parish. Development that would result in a deterioration of existing digital connectivity, or that fails to make appropriate provision for future-ready broadband delivery, will not be supported.	relates to qualitative criteria for development	appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP15: Utilities and Services	This policy sets out that development proposals should demonstrate that they can be accommodated within existing utility networks, or that necessary upgrades will be secured in step with the development. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects (LSE)	Recommendation at Screening Stage
Policy HNP16: Biodiversity and Green Corridors	This policy sets out development proposals should protect and enhance biodiversity in Hoveton, delivering measurable improvements for wildlife and people. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP17: Ecological Networks, Buffer Zones and Cumulative Impacts	This policy sets out development proposals must protect and enhance Hoveton's ecological networks in accordance with paragraphs 191 and 192 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Proposals will be supported where they meet the criteria in the policy. Detail is set out on buffer zones.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP18: Local Green Space	Policy designates 10 local green spaces.	No LSE – does not promote development. Protective policy.	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP19: Landscape and Views	This policy sets out development proposals should respect Hoveton's distinctive landscape setting and maintain the key features and qualities of important local views. Proposals will be supported where they meet the criteria in the policy.	No LSE – does not promote development.	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects (LSE)	Recommendation at Screening Stage
	15 key views have been proposed.		
Policy HNP20: Dark Skies	This policy sets out development proposals across Hoveton will be expected to minimise light pollution and protect the parish's dark night skies, including areas outside the Broads Authority boundary. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken.
Policy HNP21: Flood and Sustainable Drainage	This policy sets out development proposals should demonstrate that flood risk has been fully considered and that surface water and wastewater will be managed sustainably. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken.
Policy HNP22: Active Travel Network	This policy sets out development proposals should, where appropriate, support and enhance opportunities for walking and cycling in Hoveton. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP23: Access to the Countryside and the Broads	This policy sets out that development proposals should, where appropriate, protect and enhance access to the countryside and the Broads. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects (LSE)	Recommendation at Screening Stage
Policy HNP24: Non-Designated Heritage Assets	This policy identifies local buildings and structures as non-designated heritage assets. Applications for development affecting a Non-Designated Heritage Asset should demonstrate an understanding of the asset's significance and how the proposal conserves or enhances that significance. Development proposals should also meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP25: Local Business and Services	This policy sets out that development proposals that support the growth and diversification of local businesses and services will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP26: Upper Floors in the Village Centre	This policy sets out proposals affecting buildings in the village centre should seek to make full and active use of upper floors. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP27: Sustainable Visitor Economy	This policy sets out development proposals that support Hoveton's visitor economy will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy. Proposals for large-scale or vehicle-dominated visitor uses will not be supported where they would harm the	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects (LSE)	Recommendation at Screening Stage
	setting of the Broads, increase congestion or detract from the character of the village centre or riverside.		
Policy HNP28: Managing Flood Risk and Climate Adaptation	This policy sets out development proposals should incorporate measures to reduce flood risk and support adaptation to climate change. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy. Development that would increase flood risk, compromise natural drainage or water-storage areas, or fail to incorporate appropriate SuDS will not be supported. Requirements for foul-water connections and sewage-treatment capacity are addressed in Policy HNP15.	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken
Policy HNP29: Energy Efficiency and Low Carbon Design	This policy sets out development proposals should demonstrate how they have incorporated measures to reduce energy use, lower carbon emissions, and adapt to the effects of climate change. Proposals will be supported where they meet criteria in the policy. Proposals for the retrofitting of existing buildings to improve energy performance will be	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	None. This policy does not trigger the need for an appropriate assessment (HRA Stage 2) to be undertaken

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects (LSE)	Recommendation at Screening Stage
	supported, provided that alterations respect the character and significance of the building and its surroundings.		

Figure 21- HRA Screening Assessment

HRA Screening Conclusion

The HRA Screening Assessment concludes that no significant effects are likely to occur with regards to the integrity of European Wildlife Sites within 20km. As such a full HRA and Appropriate Assessment is not required at this point and is **screened out.**

Appendix A- Conservation Objectives of the European Sites

This appendix contains information on the European sites that are within 20km to HNP area. The site area and designated features are drawn from Natural England's website. Site conservation objectives are drawn from Natural England's website too and are only available for SACs and SPAs. Site Improvement Plans which have been published for the SPA/Ramsar Sites have been reviewed and included for information purposes.

It must be noted this information has been gathered from Natural England[49]. This document should be read in conjunction with Supplementary Advice documents provided by the Statutory Body, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Conservation Objectives.

Broadland SAC, SPA, Ramsar

Site location overview[50]

A low-lying wetland complex composed of the Bure, Yare, Thurne, and Waveney river systems of the Norfolk Broads. The mosaic of wetland habitats includes open water, reedbeds, carr woodland, grazing marsh, and fen meadow, with an extensive complex of flooded medieval peat diggings. Outstanding assemblages of rare plants and invertebrates occur at the site -- amongst a rich insect fauna are nationally rare dragonflies, spiders, moths, and butterflies, and the area is a stronghold for the butterfly Papilio machaon brittanica as well as a number of nationally rare breeding birds, including Botaurus stellaris and Circus aeruginosus.Several species of waterbirds winter there and include internationally important numbers of Bewick's swan, Cygnus columbianus bewickii. The region is important for recreation, tourism, agriculture, and wildlife, and there is a large conservation education centre[51].

Broadland SPA, which includes these extensions, is of European importance because: (a) It is used regularly by 1 % or more of the GB population of a species listed on Annex 1 of the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) in any season: Bittern Botaurus stellaris, Bewick's Swan Cygnus columbianus bewickii, Whooper Swan Cygnus cygnus cygnus, Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus, Hen Harrier Circus cyaneus and Ruff Philomachus pugnax.

It is used regularly by 1 % or more of the biogeographic population of a regularly occurring migratory species (other than those listed on Annex 1) in any season: Wigeon Anas penelope, Gadwall Anas strepera and Shoveler Anas clypeata.

Qualifying features

- A021 Botaurus stellaris; Great bittern (Breeding)
- A037 Cygnus columbianus bewickii; Bewick's swan (Non-breeding)

[49] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6581547796791296
[50] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5310905998901248?category=6581547796791296
[51] https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/68

- A038 Cygnus cygnus; Whooper swan (Non-breeding)
- A050 Anas penelope; Eurasian wigeon (Non-breeding)
- A051 Anas strepera; Gadwall (Non-breeding)
- A056 Anas clypeata; Northern shoveler (Non-breeding)
- A081 Circus aeruginosus; Eurasian marsh harrier (Breeding)
- A082 Circus cyaneus; Hen harrier (Non-breeding)
- A151 Philomachus pugnax; Ruff (Non-breeding)

Conservation Objectives

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

1. The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
2. The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
3. The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
4. The population of each of the qualifying features, and,
5. The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

Key vulnerabilities

Reviewing the Site Improvement Plan (2014[52]) there were a number of prioritised issues for the site and the features they affect. Measures were set out to address these. These can be considered as key vulnerabilities and are listed below:

- Air pollution – impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition
- Change in land management
- Change in species distributions
- Climate change
- Drainage
- Direct impact from third party
- Invasive species
- Siltation
- Inappropriate coastal management
- Inappropriate water levels
- Inappropriate ditch management
- Inappropriate scrub control
- Hydrological changes
- Public access/disturbance
- Water abstraction
- Water pollution
- Under grazing

Non-qualifying habitats and/or species in which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend

[52] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5444118129934336?category=4873023563759616

In general, the qualifying species all rely on the sites ecosystem as a whole. The species will rely on the maintenance of populations of species in which they feed on and potentially off-site habitat foraging for these species.

Breydon Water SAC, SPA, Ramsar

Site location overview[53]

An inland tidal estuary with extensive areas of mudflats exposed at low tide. The site is internationally important for wintering waterbirds, notably Bewick's Swan, Cygnus columbianus bewickii, and it supports important numbers of passage birds. Human activities include recreation, hunting, and agriculture[54].

Breydon Water SPA including the extended area is of European importance because: a) The site qualifies under article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain population of five species listed on Annex 1, in any season: Bewick's Swan Cygnus columbianus bewickii, Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta, Golden Plover Pluvialis apricaria, Ruff Philomachus pugnax and Common Tern Sterna Hirundo.

The site qualifies under article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by more than 1% of the biogeographic population of a regularly occurring migratory species (other than those listed on Annex 1), in any season: Lapwing Vanellus Vanellus.

Qualifying features

- A037 Cygnus columbianus bewickii; Bewick's swan (Non-breeding)
- A132 Recurvirostra avosetta; Pied avocet (Non-breeding)
- A140 Pluvialis apricaria; European golden plover (Non-breeding)
- A142 Vanellus vanellus; Northern lapwing (Non-breeding)
- A151 Philomachus pugnax; Ruff (Non-breeding)
- A193 Sterna hirundo; Common tern (Breeding)A
- Waterbird assemblage

Conservation Objectives

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

6. The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
7. The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
8. The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
9. The population of each of the qualifying features, and,

[53] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6376690053808128?category=6581547796791296
[54] https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/821

10. The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

Key vulnerabilities

Reviewing the Site Improvement Plan (2015[55]) there were a number of prioritised issues for the site and the features they affect. Measures were set out to address these. These can be considered as key vulnerabilities and are listed below:

- Shooting/scaring
- Change in land management
- Public access/disturbance
- Hydrological changes
- Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine

Non-qualifying habitats and/or species in which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend

In general, the qualifying species all rely on the sites ecosystem as a whole. The species will rely on the maintenance of populations of species in which they feed on and potentially off-site habitat foraging for these species.

Greater Wash SAC, SPA

Site location overview

The Wash is the largest embayment in the UK. It is connected via sediment transfer systems to the north Norfolk coast. Together, the Wash and North Norfolk Coast form one of the most important marine areas in the UK and European North Sea coast, and include extensive areas of varying, but predominantly sandy, sediments subject to a range of conditions. Communities in the intertidal include those characterised by large numbers of polychaetes, bivalve and crustaceans. Subtidal communities cover a diverse range from the shallow to the deeper parts of the embayments and include dense brittlestar beds and areas of an abundant reef-building worm ('ross worm') Sabellaria spinulosa.

The embayment supports a variety of mobile species, including a range of fish, otter Lutra lutra and common seal Phoca vitulina. The extensive intertidal flats provide ideal conditions for common seal breeding and hauling-out. Sandy sediments occupy most of the subtidal area, resulting in one of the largest expanses of subtidal sandbanks in the UK. The subtidal sandbanks vary in composition and include coarse sand through to mixed sediment at the mouth of the embayment. Communities present include large dense beds of brittlestars Ophiothrix fragilis. Species include the sand-mason worm Lanice conchilega and the tellin Angulus tenuis. Benthic communities on sandflats in the deeper, central part of the Wash are particularly diverse.

[55] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6364048115367936?category=4873023563759616

The subtidal sandbanks provide important nursery grounds for young commercial fish species, including plaice Pleuronectes platessa, cod Gadus morhua and sole Solea solea. In the tide-swept approaches to the Wash, with a high loading of suspended sand, the relatively common tube-dwelling polychaete worm Sabellaria spinulosa forms areas of biogenic reef. These structures are varied in nature, and include reefs which stand up to 30 cm proud of the seabed and which extend for hundreds of metres. The reefs extend into The Wash where super-abundant S. spinulosa occurs and where reef-like structures such as concretions and crusts have been recorded. The reefs are diverse and productive habitats which support many associated species that would not otherwise be found in predominantly sedimentary areas. Associated motile species include large numbers of polychaetes, mysid shrimps, the pink shrimp Pandalus montagui, and crabs.

Sandy flats predominate in the intertidal zone with some soft mudflats in the areas sheltered by barrier beaches and islands along the north Norfolk coast. The biota includes especially large numbers of polychaetes, mysid shrimps, the pink shrimp and crabs. Salinity ranges from that of the open coast in most of the area (supporting rich invertebrate communities) to estuarine close to the rivers. Smaller, sheltered and diverse areas of intertidal sediment, with a The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC UK0017075 Compilation date: May 2005 Version: 1 Designation citation Page 2 of 2 rich variety of communities, including some eelgrass Zostera spp. beds and large shallow pools, are protected by the north Norfolk barrier islands and sand spits. The site contains the largest single area of saltmarsh in the UK and is one of the few areas in the UK where saltmarshes are generally accreting. The proportion of the total saltmarsh vegetation represented by glasswort Salicornia and other colonising annuals is high because of the extensive enclosure of marsh in this site and is also unusual in that it forms a pioneer community with common cord-grass Spartina anglica. There are large ungrazed saltmarshes on the North Norfolk Coast and traditionally grazed saltmarshes around the Wash.

Saltmarsh swards dominated by sea-lavenders Limonium spp. are particularly well-represented. In North Norfolk, in addition to typical lower and middle saltmarsh communities, there are transitions from upper marsh to tidal reedswamp, sand dunes (which are largely within the adjacent North Norfolk Coast SAC), shingle beaches and mud/sandflats. Mediterranean saltmarsh scrub vegetation is dominated by a shrubby cover up to 1 metre high of bushes of shrubby sea-blite Suaeda vera and sea-purslane Atriplex portulacoides, with a patchy cover of herbaceous plants and bryophytes. This scrub vegetation often forms an important feature of the upper saltmarshes, and extensive examples occur where the drift-line slopes gradually and provides a transition to dune, shingle or reclaimed sections of the coast. At a number of locations on this coast perennial glasswort Sarcocornia perennis forms an open mosaic with other species at the lower limit of the sea-purslane community.

Qualifying features

Qualifying habitats: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

· Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)
· Coastal lagoons*
· Large shallow inlets and bays
· Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs (Sarcocornetea fruticosi). (Mediterranean saltmarsh scrub)
· Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide. (Intertidal mudflats and sandflats)
· Reefs
· Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand. (Glasswort and other annuals colonising mud and sand)
· Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time. (Subtidal sandbanks)

Qualifying species: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:
· Common seal Phoca vitulina
· Otter Lutra lutra

Conservation Objectives

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

Key vulnerabilities

Reviewing the Site Improvement Plan (2015) there were a number of prioritised issues for the site and the features they affect. Measures were set out to address these. These can be considered as key vulnerabilities and are listed below:

- Inappropriate water levels
- Public access/disturbance
- Siltation
- Fisheries: Recreational marine and estuarine
- Invasive species
- Inappropriate coastal management
- Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine

- Predation

Non-qualifying habitats and/or species in which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend

In general, the qualifying species all rely on the sites ecosystem as a whole and areas of freshwater for waterfowl. The species will rely on the maintenance of populations of species in which they feed on and potentially off-site habitat foraging for these species. The diet of qualifying species includes

- Common seal Phoca vitulina - known to eat a wide variety of fish, including herring, sand eels, whiting and flatfish. Shrimps and squid are also sometimes eaten.
- Otter Lutra lutra - fish, amphibians, birds, eggs, insects.

Great Yarmouth North Denes SAC, SPA

Site location overview[56]

The Great Yarmouth North Denes contains two component areas, the Great Yarmouth North Denes actively acreting low dune system and beach, together with the beach and foredune ridge at Winterton-Horsey Dunes. The two component areas are linked, due to the high mobility of little terns, and to the dynamic nature of the beach shapes which influences suitability for breeding. The boundary at the Great Yarmouth North Denes component encompasses the dune system and beach down to the Mean Low Water Mark and at the Winterton-Horsey component, the inland boundary follows the line of hard defences and foredune ridge, the seaward boundary follows the Mean Low Water Mark. The Great Yarmouth North Denes proposed SPA qualifies under Article 4.1, by supporting a nationally important breeding population of little tern Sterna albifrons, an Annex 1 species. A total of 277 pairs was recorded breeding in 1991, representing 1% of the EEC breeding population and 11.5% of the British breeding population.

Qualifying features

Qualifying Features: A195 Sterna albifrons; Little tern (Breeding)

Conservation Objectives

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

11. The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
12. The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
13. The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
14. The population of each of the qualifying features, and,

[56] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5165293655556096?category=6581547796791296

15. The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

Key vulnerabilities

Reviewing the Site Improvement Plan (2014) there were a number of prioritised issues for the site and the features they affect. Measures were set out to address these. These can be considered as key vulnerabilities and are listed below:

Non-qualifying habitats and/or species in which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend

In general, the qualifying species all rely on the sites ecosystem as a whole. The species will rely on the maintenance of populations of species in which they feed on and potentially off-site habitat foraging for these species.

Norfolk Valley Fens SAC

Site location overview

This site comprises a series of valley-head spring-fed fens. Such spring-fed flush fens are very rare in the lowlands. The spring-heads are dominated by the small sedge fen type, mainly referable to black-bog-rush – blunt-flowered rush (Schoenus nigricans – Juncus subnodulosus) mire, but there are transitions to reedswamp and other fen and wet grassland types. The individual fens vary in their structure according to intensity of management and provide a wide range of variation. There is a rich flora associated with these fens, including species such as grass-of-Parnassus Parnassia palustris, common butterwort Pinguicula vulgaris, marsh helleborine Epipactis palustris and narrow-leaved marsh-orchid Dactylorhiza traunsteineri.

In places the calcareous fens grade into acidic flush communities on the valley sides. Purple moor-grass Molinia caerulea is often dominant with a variety of mosses including thick carpets of bog-moss Sphagnum spp. Marshy grassland may be present on drier ground and purple moor-grass is again usually dominant but cross-leaved heath Erica tetralix can be frequent. Alder Alnus glutinosa forms carr woodland in places by streams. Wet and dry heaths and acid, neutral and calcareous grassland surround the mires.

Within the Norfolk Valley Fens there are a number of marginal fens associated with pingos – pools that formed in hollows left when large blocks of ice melted at the end of the last Ice Age. These are very ancient wetlands and several support strong populations of Desmoulin's whorl snail Vertigo moulinsiana as part of a rich assemblage of rare and scarce species in standing water habitat. At Flordon Common a strong population of narrow-mouthed whorl snail Vertigo angustior occurs in flushed grassland with yellow iris Iris pseudacorus.

Qualifying features

Qualifying habitats: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Alkaline fens. (Calcium-rich springwater-fed fens)
- Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae). (Alder woodland on floodplains)*

Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae. (Calcium-rich fen dominated by great fen sedge (saw sedge))*

- European dry heaths
- Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae). (Purple moor-grass meadows)
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix. (Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath)
- Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (FestucoBrometalia). (Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone)

Qualifying species: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:

- Narrow-mouthed whorl snail Vertigo angustior
- Desmoulin's whorl snail Vertigo moulinsiana

Conservation Objectives

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats, and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site

Key vulnerabilities

Reviewing the Site Improvement Plan (2014) there were a number of prioritised issues for the site and the features they affect. Measures were set out to address these. These can be considered as key vulnerabilities and are listed below:

- Air Pollution
- Change in land management and species distributions
- Inappropriate cutting/mowing, scrub control and water levels
- Hydrological changes
- Invasive Species
- Water Pollution

- Water Abstraction
- Under grazing and over grazing

Non-qualifying habitats and/or species in which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend

In general, the qualifying species all rely on the sites ecosystem as a whole. The species will rely on the maintenance of populations of species in which they feed on and potentially off-site habitat foraging for these species.

The Broads SAC

Site location overview

The Broads in East Anglia contain several examples of naturally nutrient-rich lakes. Although artificial, having been created by peat digging in medieval times, these lakes and the ditches in areas of fen and drained marshlands support relict vegetation of the original Fenland flora, and collectively this site contains one of the richest assemblages of rare and local aquatic species in the UK. The stonewort – pondweed – water-milfoil – water-lily (Characeae – Potamogeton – Myriophyllum – Nuphar) associations are well-represented, as are club-rush – common reed Scirpo – Phragmitetum associations. The dyke (ditch) systems support vegetation characterised by water-soldier Stratiotes aloides, whorled water-milfoil Myriophyllum verticillatum and broad-leaved pondweed Potamogeton natans as well as being a stronghold of little whirlpool ram's-horn snail Anisus vorticulus and Desmoulin's whorl snail Vertigo moulinsiana in East Anglia. The range of wetlands and associated habitats also provides suitable conditions for otters Lutra lutra. The Broads is the richest area for stoneworts (charophytes) in Britain. The core of this interest is the Thurne Broads and particularly Hickling Broad, a large shallow brackish lake. Within the Broads examples of Chara vegetation are also found within fen pools (turf ponds) and fen and marsh ditch systems.

The Broads supports a number of rare and local charophyte species, including Chara aspera, C. baltica, C. connivens, C. contraria, C. curta, C. intermedia, C. pedunculata, Nitella mucronata, Nitellopsis obtusa, Tolypella glomerata and T. intricata.

The complex of sites contains the largest blocks of alder Alnus glutinosa wood in England. Within the complex complete successional sequences occur from open water through reedswamp to alder woodland, which has developed on fen peat. There is a correspondingly wide range of flora, including uncommon species such as marsh fern Thelypteris palustris. This site contains the largest example of calcareous fens in the UK. The great fen-sedge Cladium mariscus habitat occurs in a diverse set of conditions that maintain its speciesrichness, including small sedge mires, and areas where great fen-sedge occurs at the limits of its ecological range. The habitat type forms large-scale mosaics with other fen types, fenmeadows (with purple moor-grass Moilinia caerulea), open water and woodland, and contains important associated plants such as fen orchid Liparis loeselii, marsh helleborine Epipactis palustris, lesser tussock-sedge Carex diandra, slender sedge C. lasiocarpa and fibrous tussock-sedge C.

appropinquata. There are also areas of short sedge fen (both black bog-rush – blunt-flowered rush Schoenus nigricans – Juncus subnodulosus mire and bottle sedge – moss Carex rostrata – Calliergon cuspidatum/giganteum mire), which in places form a mosaic with common reed – milk-parsley Phragmites australis – Peucedanum palustris fen. The Broads also contain examples of transition mire, that are relatively small, having developed in re-veg

Qualifying features

Qualifying habitats: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Alkaline fens. (Calcium-rich spring water-fed fens)
- Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae). (Alder woodland on floodplains)*
- Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae. (Calcium-rich fen dominated by great fen sedge (saw sedge))*
- Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. (Calcium-rich nutrient-poor lakes, lochs and pools)
- Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae). (Purple moor-grass meadows)
- Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation. (Naturally nutrient-rich lakes or lochs which are often dominated by pondweed)
- Transition mires and quaking bogs. (Very wet mires often identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface)

Qualifying species: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:

- Desmoulin's whorl-snail Vertigo moulinsiana
- Little whirlpool ram's-horn snail Anisus vorticulus
- Fen orchid Liparis loeselii
- Otter Lutra lutra

Conservation Objectives

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

1. The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
2. The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
3. The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
4. The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
5. The populations of qualifying species, and,
6. The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

Key vulnerabilities

Reviewing the Site Improvement Plan (2014) there were a number of prioritised issues for the site and the features they affect. Measures were set out to address these. These can be considered as key vulnerabilities and are listed below:

Non-qualifying habitats and/or species in which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend

In general, the qualifying species all rely on the sites ecosystem as a whole. The species will rely on the maintenance of populations of species in which they feed on and potentially off-site habitat foraging for these species.

River Wensum SAC

Site location overview[57]

The Wensum is a naturally enriched, calcareous lowland river. The upper reaches are fed by springs that rise from the chalk and by run-off from calcareous soils rich in plant nutrients. This gives rise to beds of submerged and emergent vegetation characteristic of a chalk stream. Lower down, the chalk is overlain with boulder clay and river gravels, resulting in aquatic plant communities more typical of a slow-flowing river on mixed substrate. Much of the adjacent land is managed for hay crops and by grazing, and the resulting mosaic of meadow and marsh habitats, provides niches for a wide variety of specialised plants and animals.

Ranunculus vegetation occurs throughout much of the river's length. Stream water-crowfoot *R. penicillatus* ssp. *pseudofluitans* is the dominant *Ranunculus* species but thread-leaved water-crowfoot *R. trichophyllus* and fan-leaved water-crowfoot *R. circinatus* also occur in association with the wide range of aquatic and emergent species that contribute to this vegetation type. The river supports an abundant and rich invertebrate fauna including the native freshwater crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* as well as a diverse fish community, including bullhead *Cottus gobio* and brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*. The site has an abundant and diverse mollusc fauna which includes Desmoulin's whorl-snail *Vertigo moulinsiana*, which is associated with aquatic vegetation at the river edge and adjacent fens.

Qualifying features

Qualifying species: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho- Batrachion* vegetation. (Rivers with floating vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot)

[57] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6039440396910592?category=6581547796791296

Qualifying species: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:

- White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*
- Bullhead *Cottus gobio*
- Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*
- Desmoulin's whorl snail *Vertigo moulinsiana*

Conservation Objectives

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

1. The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying
2. species
3. The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
4. The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
5. The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
6. The populations of qualifying species, and,
7. The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

Key vulnerabilities

Reviewing the Site Improvement Plan (2014[58]) there were a number of prioritised issues for the site and the features they affect. Measures were set out to address these. These can be considered as key vulnerabilities and are listed below:

- Physical modification
- Inappropriate weirs dams and other structures
- Siltation
- Invasive Species
- Water Pollution
- Water abstraction

Non-qualifying habitats and/or species in which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend

In general, the qualifying species all rely on the sites ecosystem as a whole. The species will rely on the maintenance of populations of species in which they feed on and potentially off-site habitat foraging for these species.

[58] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6720168281505792?category=4873023563759616

Paston Great Barn SAC

Site location overview[59]

Paston Great Barn is the only known example of a maternity roost of barbastelle bats Barbastella barbastellus in a building. The Barn is a 16th century thatched barn with associated outbuildings. A maternity colony of barbastelles utilises a range of cracks and crevices in the roof timbers for roosting.

Qualifying features

Qualifying species: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:

- Barbastelle bat Barbastella barbastellus

Conservation Objectives

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

1. The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species
2. The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
3. The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely
4. The populations of qualifying species, and,
5. The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

Key vulnerabilities

Reviewing the Site Improvement Plan (2015[60]) there were a number of prioritised issues for the site and the features they affect. Measures were set out to address these. These can be considered as key vulnerabilities and are listed below:

- Change to site conditions
- Wildlife/arson
- Offsite habitat availability/management
- Public access/disturbance
- Predation

Non-qualifying habitats and/or species in which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend

In general, the qualifying species all rely on the sites ecosystem as a whole. The species will rely on the maintenance of populations of species in which they feed on and potentially off-site habitat foraging for these species.

[59] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6035066643808256?category=6581547796791296
[60] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4678040692981760?category=4873023563759616

Winteron-Horsey Dunes SAC

Site location overview [61]

This site consists of an extensive dune system supporting acidic plant communities. It contains well-developed areas of dune heath, slacks and dune grassland merging into grazing marsh and downy birch Betula pubescens woodland. The seaward edge of the dunes is well vegetated with marram Ammophila arenaria and lymegrass Leymus arenarius. The older, grey dunes support a more diverse flora with frequent sand sedge Carex arenaria, sheep's-fescue Festuca ovina, common polypody Polypodium vulgare and narrow buckler-fern Dryopteris carthusiana. Three rare grasses are present in abundance; grey hair-grass Corynephorus canescens, rush-leaved fescue Festuca juncifolia and purple marram X Calammophila baltica. A notable assemblage of bryophytes and lichens occurs on these acidic dunes. Dune heath has developed on the landward side with heather Calluna vulgaris, bell heather Erica cinerea, cross-leaved heath Erica tetralix and bog-moss Sphagnum spp in the damper hollows. Because of their acidic soils, the dune slacks support swamp and mire communities with notable species including royal fern Osmunda regalis and common wintergreen Pyrola rotundifolia. In addition to small areas of typical dune slack vegetation characterised by creeping willow Salix repens ssp. argentea with the moss Calliergon cuspidatum and Yorkshire-fog Holcus lanatus.

Qualifying features

Qualifying habitats: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (Calluno-Ulicetea) (coastal dune heathland).*
- Embryonic shifting dunes.
- Humid dune slacks.
- Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) (shifting dunes with marram).

Conservation Objectives

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

7. The extent and distribution of the qualifying natural habitats
8. The structure and function (including typical species) of the qualifying natural habitats, and,
9. The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely

[61] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5518326646177792?category=6581547796791296

Key vulnerabilities

Reviewing the Site Improvement Plan (2014[62]) there were a number of prioritised issues for the site and the features they affect. Measures were set out to address these. These can be considered as key vulnerabilities and are listed below:

- Air pollution – impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition
- Coastal squeeze (E.g. shifting dunes)
- Invasive species
- Inappropriate coastal management
- Inappropriate scrub control
- Inappropriate pest control
- Hydrological changes
- Public access/disturbance
- Under grazing

Non-qualifying habitats and/or species in which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend

In general, the qualifying species all rely on the sites ecosystem as a whole. The species will rely on the maintenance of populations of species in which they feed on and potentially off-site habitat foraging for these species.

[62] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6708502814785536?category=4873023563759616